

THE PARADISE OF THE HOLY FATHERS



VOLUME I

TRANSLATED BY E.A. WALLIS BUDGE
- Revised Edition

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- *Volume I*

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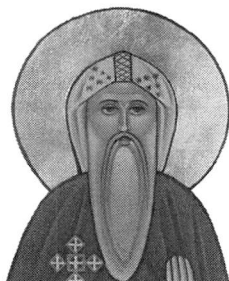
The Lives of the Fathers

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Translated by

E. A. Wallis Budge

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ST SHENOUDA COPTIC ORTHODOX MONASTERY
PUTTY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

2009

THE PARADISE OF THE HOLY FATHERS

- *Volume I*

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Preface

DURING THE WINTER OF 1888 the Vicar of the Chaldean Patriarch at Mosul (Nineveh) was so kind as to show me some of the Syriac manuscripts in his possession. Among them was a thick oblong quarto volume containing the Lives of the Holy Men by Palladius and St. Jerome. I was familiar with the Syriac MSS of the Paradise of Palladius in the British Museum, but I had never before seen so lengthy a copy of the work. The manuscript was old, that is to say, it was written probably in the 13th or 14th century, and as it was impossible to buy the volume, it being Church property, I asked permission to have copy of it made. To this the Vicar assented, and a copy was made in due course and sent to England. On examination it was found to contain the Life of St. Anthony, by Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, the Book of Paradise, by Palladius, the Asketikon, or History of the Monks of Tabenna, the Histories of the Solitaries of the Desert of Egypt, attributed to St. Jerome, the Sayings of the Fathers, and the Questions and Answers of the Holy Men. In fact the manuscript contained a collection of works, which were of the highest importance for the history of the rise and growth of Christian monasticism in Egypt.

In 1893 I published a full description of the contents of the manuscript (see Thomas of Marga, *The Book of Governors*, Vol. II, pp. 192-206), and several extracts from it. It was generally recognized that it contained a copy of the famous Redaction of the Book of Paradise which was made by Anan-Isho when he was a monk in the monastery of Beth Abhe, probably early in the 7th century. In 1898 my friend Dom Cuthbert Butler published the *Prolegomena*

of his edition of the Greek text of the *Paradise of Palladius*, and in this work he discussed at length the critical value of my manuscript copy of the Syriac version. Soon after this I made translations of the five works contained in the manuscript, these appeared together with the Syriac texts, in two volumes in 1904. The work was not available for the public, being printed for private circulation only.

The number of those who are interested in the history of the Christian monastic movement in Egypt has increased considerably in recent years. In answer to many requests it was decided to publish a popular edition of the translation of Anan-Isho's great work in a handy form, at a price which would place it within the reach of every reader. I therefore revised my translation, which had appeared in 1904, by the light of recently acquired manuscripts, and was able to fill up several gaps in the text: the present work is the result. It is hoped that this edition may add to the deserved popularity of the *Book of Paradise* and increase the reputation of *Palladius*.

E. A. WALLIS BUDGE
British Museum, June 5, 1907.

By the power of our Lord Jesus Christ we begin to write the book of the histories of the glorious acts of the holy Fathers, who were monks of the desert and who hated the world and all that belongs to it, which was composed by the holy man of spiritual excellence Mar Palladius, Bishop of the City of Helenopolis, and was addressed to Lausus the Perfect.

PART ONE

The Life of St. Anthony by Athanasius

LET US BEGIN NOW, BY THE HELP OF OUR LORD, and write first of all the history of the life and acts of the saint and the mighty one of God, the blessed Mar Anthony, which was composed by St. Athanasius, the Archbishop of Alexandria. May our Lord help and strengthen the writer to write, and the reader to read and to perform everything, which is commanded herein. Amen. O Lord, help and bring me to the end of the work! Amen.

Marvelous care and the loving urging of your understanding for the monkish brethren who are in Egypt have moved me with solicitude to hope that by constant meditation on the following stories your mind may be drawn to perfection, so that you may not be repeating with your mouth(s) only the following triumphs, and others which are like to them, but that also in your persons you may be preachers of the example of these lives and deeds. Now, your careful solicitude is seemly and is most acceptable, and in this respect you have become ministers of the Sublime Will, for it is right that this appearance should not depart from the mirror of your career, and that you should know at once the craftiness of the Enemy, that is to say, what form exactly it takes, and what it actually is, and by what means it brings a monk to nothing. This thing has been shaped at this time by God. For behold monasteries which flourish

like the flowers and sweet scents of the springtime have been scattered throughout the whole earth, and the sign of the solitary ascetics rule from one end to the other. It is then a beautiful thing for us to embrace and to lay hold upon this power of discernment, which your mind has conceived, and to be the ministers of the fervour of your love with joy and solicitude. For who could be negligent of this service and be blameless, inasmuch as those who have invited me to write the history of the triumphs of a righteous man are themselves righteous? And may the Giver of gifts (blessed be His honour!) Himself open the door of our entreaty, and may we draw into our net each one of the stories which we have been assigned by your love to write down, not for our own sake only, but for the sake of your most excellent entreaty, and for the sake of the courageous thoughts which are in you, so that we may fulfil your labor, and for the sake of the work of him who triumphed by these acts and deeds, in order that his triumphs may never die among his sons in our Lord; and finally for His name's sake, that in this history we may also magnify the glory of God and show forth how great is the might which He gives to those who fear Him.

We have been assigned through your affection to write down the triumphs of the blessed man Anthony, and to send by an envoy a history of them to you in writing which will show how it was that he began his discipleship, what manner of life he led before this took place, how he was living when he brought his days to a close, and whether all the words which have been spoken concerning him and have come to our hearing are true. Straightway with joy I have devoted myself to the fulfilment of your command. By merely writing a commemorative history of the blessed Anthony I also shall gain great benefit, for I am convinced, O my beloved, that by narrating these histories two things will result. First, we shall increase the renown of the man of God in honour and wonder, and secondly we shall begin to instruct your minds step by step; for the acts of the blessed Anthony form a perfect example for the solitary ascetics. O my beloved, as concerning the things which you have heard about him before, from those who lived with him, or from those who heard them from those who were with him continually, or from those also to whom accounts of him were handed down by tradition, you shall have no doubt whatsoever. You have, however, only heard a little out of a great quantity, and only just as much as the mind (or memory) is able to narrate. My own mind convinces me that such is the case, and in compiling the present history I have learned that indeed this is so. For when I thought that I had collected and enumerated a large number of stories, suddenly a great many others, which were far more numerous than those which had already been collected by me, sprang up, and made my mind to be confused; but as many as I was able to remember and to collect my mind has, with joy, committed to writing. As for you, do

not cease asking questions and inquiring concerning the blessed Anthony, especially of those who come by the river from the Thebaid, in Upper Egypt. For it may happen that from those from whom you expect to hear nothing you may increase your knowledge greatly. For when a man belongs to those who have knowledge, he repeats the story, which he knows, and though we may think and be convinced that we have collected too many already, we find, on examination, that our narrative is immeasurably short. Many of those who openly received the accounts of the wonderful things which were wrought by his hands have departed from this world; and of those who are still living, how many are there who have not revealed to us concerning the conversations which they had with him, or the things done in his presence! What man would wish to narrate to his companions only a few stories out of many?

When I had received your letter, and had read and seen the force of it, and what it demanded, I was wishful to send and bring certain solitary ascetics who were always with him, so that, perhaps, between them and me I might be able to fulfil your desire. But because the time in which ships could travel from Egypt to the Thebaid, and from the Thebaid to here, was unfavourable, and because the letter's carrier was in haste, and because I knew that I had been with Saint Anthony continually, I made it to be a care to me to write myself to your loving persons, and tell you what I was able to learn about him, and all that happened between us for a long time, and how I poured water upon his hands; and I have regarded carefully the word of the truth, lest a man should hear what was superfluous and should be in doubt, or should despise and belittle that which he heard.

THE EARLIEST DAYS

By race the blessed Anthony was an Egyptian from a noble family, and he owned slaves. His forefathers were believers. From his earliest childhood he was brought up in the fear of our Lord and when he was a child and was being reared among his own kinsfolk, he knew nothing of his father or of what went on among his own people. He was so silent in disposition, and his mind was so humble, that he did not even trouble his parents by asking them questions. He was exceedingly modest (or shy), and he was honest beyond measure. He was unable to read or to write because he could not bear the rough behaviour of the boys in the school; his whole desire was to be even according to what is written about Jacob, He was a simple man, and a dweller in tents. He clung closely to his parents, and when they came to church he would run before them in the flow of his affection; and he was not like an ordinary child, the course of whose customary attendance is broken by the amusements of childhood. He never

neglected the observance of any of the seasons of the Church, and he neither neglected them in his childhood, nor held them lightly in his early manhood. From the time when he was a child and knew how to distinguish between good and evil, his going to church was not a mere matter of custom, but was the result of discerning understanding. Moreover, he did not wait for the members of his family (or parents) to be admonishers to him, because by his life and acts he became a teacher to them. For they learned by the experience of his childhood that he did not live among them like an ordinary simple child, and they accepted the proof of the righteousness of his early manhood; he paid them honour after the manner of a full grown man, and they regarded him as the master of the house (i.e. steward).

When the time arrived and they brought their days to an end, and they departed from this world when he was about eighteen or twenty years old, he and one little sister were left behind, and it happened from sheer necessity that he had to rule the house and take care of his sister. And when as yet not six months had passed since the death of his parents, and when, according to his desire, he was continually in the church, it came to pass one day, when he was in the church, that a righteous idea entered his mind, and that he began to meditate within himself how the blessed Apostles forsook everything and followed after our Redeemer; and how the others who succeeded them and walked in their footsteps sold everything which they had possessed and laid the money which they received at the feet of the Apostles, that it might be spent upon the poor; and how great was the blessing of those who had in this wise obeyed the voice of our Redeemer. Whilst he was meditating these and similar things, the lesson was being read, and when the Scriptures were ended, the Gospel was read, and he heard the words of our Lord, Who said to the rich man, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell everything which you have, and give to the poor, and take your cross, and come after Me, and there shall be to you treasure in heaven." The blessed Anthony received the word of the Gospel as a sign to himself, and he reflected that this reading had not taken place as a matter of chance, but in order that the righteous idea which had taken up its abode in him might be confirmed. Straight way he went out from the church and departed and set in order his house and the possessions which he had inherited from his parents. He had three hundred fields, a great estate which produced abundant crops, and these he handed over to the people of his village, so that they might trouble neither himself nor his sister. He sold the remainder of his other possessions which were in the house and gathered in money not a little, which he distributed among the poor, but he laid by a little which was sufficient for his sister's wants.

When, on another Sunday, he had again entered the church at the time

of the reading of the Gospel, he inclined his ear carefully to see what word would come forth for him. As he was inclining his ear, the word of our Lord to His disciples was immediately read out, saying, "Take no thought for the morrow." Straight away he received the commandment readily, and he went out and distributed that which remained to him for his sister's use among the poor. He spoke to his sister words of love, truth, and fear of God. He made her mind to be like his own; and delivered her over to certain chaste nuns who were living there at that time. When he had made an end of these things, he immediately became a solitary monk, and he took no care for anything except his soul. He began to train himself in the habits of the strictest abstinence and self-denial. He dwelt alone in a house which was by the side of the village, for as yet there were no monasteries for ascetics in Egypt, and among the monks there was no man who had any knowledge of the inner desert; and everyone who wished to have a care for his soul used to seek out an habitation of this kind. Saint Anthony did not take himself to the mountain at a great distance from the village, but only at a sufficient distance from there, so that he might be somewhat apart from the habitation of men.

ANSWERING THE CALL

At that time there was in another village on their borders a certain blessed old man, who from his youth up had lived a life of solitary asceticism. The blessed Anthony saw this man, and was wishful to emulate his fair deeds. First of all he also began to live by the side of the village, in places which were free from the feet of men, and whilst living in this abode his mind was torn with doubt about the fair works of the ascetic life. He gave his soul no rest, for he was constant in meditation about the truth. He used to ponder within himself and say, "How did the righteous men of old live? With what manner of triumphs did they please God? Who can make me worthy of even a sight of these?" As a result of this meditation, which arose from love of the righteous men, he began to ask and inquire, "What was the condition of these righteous men? Who shall inform me concerning them?" Whilst asking questions that he might learn something about any of the righteous men who were in that place, in the fervour of his love he used to go forth strenuously to seek him (the old man); and he did not at first return to his own place, without first of all paying homage to the man of God. He was like to the wise bee, which hovers and rests over plants of every kind which are filled with honey that it may fill its habitation with the goodness of the earth. In this manner he himself also received from the sight of each of the righteous men provision for the marvelous way; and this was his manner at the beginning of his ascetic

career. His thoughts were exceedingly well disciplined at the beginning of his life of righteousness, so that he might not in any wise be anxious about his family, or be fettered by the love of kinsfolk, or be held fast by the affairs of this temporary life. From all these he purged himself that he might be a pure offering to God. He also used to labor with his hands, because he had heard the words, "if a man does not work, he shall not eat." With a very little of the wages of the work of his hands he used to provide himself with food, and the rest he spent upon the poor. And he prayed continually, for he had heard the words, "Pray, and let it not be tedious to you," and he listened to the reading of the Scriptures in such wise that not one word might fall to the ground. From then on he kept in his mind the remembrance of the commandments which he heard, and they became to him even as the Scriptures.

By these acts and deeds the blessed Anthony was showing love to his soul, and, even as it is written, "He found favour with God and with man." For when it happened that he went to visit the righteous men, he hearkened to them and was subject to them wholly and in everything, and the love with which they loved him was such that, if it happened that he tarried in paying his visit to them, they sent after him with anxious care. They observed how greatly he was the object of God's mercy, and how great a measure of the love of the things which were spiritual were found with him, and they saw how easy it was for him to gain a reward by trafficking in the riches of heaven. Therefore each one of them, according to the measure of his power, took him by his hand. They looked and saw that he was to be perfected as a chosen vessel, and they observed when as yet he himself saw it not that he had adopted for himself a glorious rule of life among the righteous men. For what joy is there to which graciousness is not found to be joined? Or what humility is there that those who possess it are adorned in which it does not dwell? Or what love is there, which is the foundation of all the commandments, which it does not rule? What man is there who, when he imagines himself to be merciful, is not carried away by this imagination, and who does not become a prince of wrath, and jealousy, and calumny?

Saint Anthony was the storehouse of fasting, prayer, ascetic labors, patient endurance, and of righteousness, which is the mother of them all. But towards those who were young monks like himself he was not envious, except in one matter only, that is to say, he would not be second to any of them in fair works. He contrived in every possible manner not to give offence to the wicked man; on the contrary, he wished that those who were joined together with him might be drawn to his opinion (or mind) by his solicitude for them and by his graciousness, and that they might make progress in their career. He toiled in his labors in such a manner that they were not only envious of him, but they

rejoiced in him and gave thanksgiving for him. By reason of these triumphs every man used to call him Theophilus, which is, being interpreted, God-loving, and all the righteous gave him this name; and some of them loved him like a brother, and some of them like a son.

When the enemy, the hater of the virtues and the lover of evil things, saw all this great perfection in the young man, he could not endure it, and he surrounded himself with his slaves, and began to work on Anthony. At the beginning of his temptations of the saint he approached him with flattery, and cast into him anxiety as to his possessions, solicitude and love for his sister, for his family, for his kinsfolk, and the love of money and lusts of various kinds. Also of the thought of the rest of the things of the life of this world, of the hard and laborious life which he lived, of the weakness of body which would come upon him with the lapse of time; and, in short, he stirred up in him the power of the thoughts so that by means of one or other of them he might be flattered, and might be made to possess shortcomings and be caught in the net through his instigation.

When the enemy saw that his craftiness in this matter was without profit, and that the more he brought temptation to Saint Anthony, the more strenuous the saint was in protecting himself against him with the armour of righteousness, he attacked him by means of the vigour of early manhood which is bound up in the nature of our humanity. With the annoyance of passion he used to trouble him by night, and in the daytime also he would vex him and pain him with the same to such an extent that even those who saw him knew from his appearance that he was waging war against the Adversary. But the more the devil brought to him filthy and maddening thoughts, the more Saint Anthony took refuge in prayer and in abundant supplication, and amid them all he remained wholly chaste. The devil was working upon him every shameful deed according to his need, and at length he appeared to Saint Anthony in the form of a woman; and other things which resembled this he performed with ease for such things are a subject for boasting to him.

The blessed Anthony knelt down upon his knees on the ground, and prayed before Him Who said, "Before you cry to Me, I will answer you," and said, "O my Lord, this I entreat You: do not let Your love be blotted out from my mind, and behold, I am, by Your grace, innocent before You." The enemy multiplied in him the thoughts of lust, until Saint Anthony became as one who was being burned up, not through the devil, but through his own lusts. He girded himself about with the threat of the thought of the Judgement, and of the torture of Gehenna, and of the worm which dies not. Whilst meditating on the thoughts, which could be directed against the devil, he prayed for thoughts, which would be hostile to him. Thus, to the reproach and shame of

the enemy, these things could not be performed; for he who imagined that he could be God was made a mock of by a young man, and he who boasted over flesh and blood was vanquished by a man who was clothed with flesh.

In all these things our Lord, Who put on a human body for our sakes, was his helper. He strengthened him to become a shield against the devil, so that by means of this act of grace which was wrought on our behalf, before any of the blessed men lived, by the merit of His agony He taught us in what it is meant that we should boast. For when one repeated too often those triumphs, which were wrought for him, Saint Anthony answered and said, "It was not I who worked, but His grace which was with me."

When the enemy saw that he was vanquished in this fight, and that his craftiness was driven away and brought to naught by the thought (or mind) of the righteous man, he gnashed his teeth, and cried out that he would show the righteous man his evil inner nature (or thoughts) in an external material form. That, perhaps, by means of fear and terror he might find an opportunity to perform his will. He appeared to Saint Anthony in the form of an Indian boy, and he began to say to him, "Whom do you see? I have come, and behold I will stand up, and I will overcome you, and I will bring you low, even as I do many." Whilst he was saying these words, the blessed Anthony made over himself the Sign of the Cross, and ceased to tremble. The Enemy saw the Sign of the Cross, and straightway was terrified. When the blessed Anthony saw that he was terrified, he began to ask him a question, saying, "Who are you, by whose voice such words as these are heard by me?" Then the enemy began to say to him after the manner of a man who blusters, "I, even I, am the lover of error and of fornication, and it is I who cast the provoking of these thoughts and flatteries into the mind of man. It is I who have taken upon myself to lead many astray, and I fight against every man, and I am against righteousness, and I am, even as the Prophet called me, 'the spirit of fornication,' for through me have gone astray all those who have stumbled. It is I who injured you on several occasions, and you have been held in contempt by me in everything."

The blessed Anthony gave thanks to the Lord, and gained great encouragement, and said, "What power do you think you have, O Enemy, to resist the might of the Cross? You have done well to appear in the form of an Indian, for you are black in your nature, and you are as pitifully weak as a boy who has been brought low by punishment. You are esteemed as naught by me, and I tremble not at your wiles; for the Lord helps me, and I shall look in triumph upon my enemies." When that black being heard these words, straightway his appearance vanished from Anthony's sight. This is the first strife which Saint Anthony waged against his enemy, or rather, this is the first act of assistance which came to help Anthony from our Redeemer, Who vanquished

sin in His own body, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, and that we might not walk after the flesh but after the spirit.

Although the blessed Anthony saw the enemy made powerless and brought low, he neither neglected his prayers nor ceased from his desired course of life, for he knew well that his contest was against a crafty being, who, although he had been vanquished for the time, would not cease to trouble, and who, whenever he could find an opportunity through some small negligence on his part, would suddenly rise up and vanquish him that had on several occasions gained the victory over him. For Saint Anthony knew that there was no cessation to his wrongdoing, and that he wandered about like a roaring lion seeking whom he might break. He had learned from the Scriptures that the snares of the Adversary were many, and he was certain from his own knowledge that he strove in this manner; and he therefore contended strenuously in the fear of God, keeping his object before him.

He pondered in his mind that although the Enemy had not been able to draw him into his net with lusts of diverse kinds, he had still other means whereby he was known to make our humanity to sin; for the nature of man yearns to sin always.

THE SEEKING OF VIRTUE

It is especially right for us in the time of our victory, when we have our understanding under our will, to oppress our body and to bring it into subjection to the will of freedom and of righteousness, lest, while we are imagining that we are victors over one class of sins, we find that we are vanquished by others which are their opposite. Saint Anthony kept this in mind, and he was thinking these thoughts always, and day by day he was adding toil to his former works of asceticism. Many were wondering at the greatness of the patient endurance which he possessed, and how he was long suffering in his afflictions. For behold, the freedom of his spirit (or soul), and the thoughts of his mind, by reason of the great length of time which they were practised by him, as it were renewed him, and changed him from one kind of being to another. He used to employ as a foundation some small matter from the example of others, and then he would take it and polish it in his own person, and with him it became so beautiful that the spectators of it imagined that it was to be found with him alone. For he was a perfect handicraftsman in matters which related to the fear of God, and wherever he saw that one of the heavenly works of uprightness was being practised by a man who was not honouring it for its own value, he would take it, and polish it in his own person, and would make manifest how great its beauty was.

Saint Anthony kept vigil to the extreme, to such an extent that the greater number of his days dawned on him without his having had any sleep. He was accustomed to eat at evening daily, but on occasions he passed three days, or four days, or even whole weeks at a time without eating. His food was bread and salt, and his drink was water, and in the matter of wine, and flesh, and other dainty meats he declared them to be so superfluous, that they ought not to be used even by ordinary monks. What he slept upon was a mat made of palm leaves only, but for a very long time he used to make the bare ground his bed. He was, moreover, exceedingly careful not to anoint himself with oil, for he used to say that oil rendered the body soft and made the members of it effeminate, and for this reason he required young men to distil upon themselves from their inward minds the oil of strenuousness. He was also mindful of the word of the Apostle, which he spoke, saying, "When I am weak, then I am strong." He possessed a wonderful mind, for he never pondered and thought how far he had advanced in discipleship, but each day he kept in mind that he had only just begun at the beginning; for he remembered the word of the Apostle which he spoke, "That which is behind me I forget, and I stretch forward to the things which are before me." Also the words of the Prophet Elijah which he spoke, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand this day." Thus he prepared himself to be worthy to stand always before the Majesty, even as the man Elijah who stood on that day before the Lord. He used to say to himself, "It is right that a monk should know that in his manner of life (or habitation) and in his acts and deeds he must be an alien to the world, and an associate (or son of the yoke) of the Angelic Watchers."

THE STRUGGLE IN THE TOMB

After these things he passed into another frame of mind, and, having decided within himself that he would go forth from the village, he departed and took up his abode in a tomb in the cemetery, which was situated in a mountain which lay close by the village; and he commanded one of his acquaintances to bring him a morsel of bread from time to time. And having done these things and entered into the tomb and shut the door upon himself, straightway the Adversary, together with a multitude of devils who were his associates, burst in upon him there, for he was afraid to let Saint Anthony go from the village altogether, and he began to say to him, "How great is that which you endure! To what limit will you drive yourself? You have come and have entered into the place of our abode. What man is there who has ever done this? When was it ever heard that men ought to live among the tombs? We have been driven out of the village, and we shall also be driven out from among the tombs."

Therefore we will take vengeance upon you, for it is you who have made us fools." Then they began to smite him with blows. They smote him so severely that at length he fell on the ground, and nothing but his breath was left in him. Saint Anthony used to relate that the blows with which the devils smote him were more severe than those of the children of men. God brought help to him, and would not deliver him over to death, for He put it into the mind of him that used to visit him to come quickly, and to open the door of the tomb according to his custom, and he saw the blessed Anthony, who was similar to a dead man by reason of the blows. Straightaway he lifted him up and brought him to the church in the village. There collected about him no small number of people, and they gathered together and sat by his side as if he had been a dead man. By the sweet rest of sleep the blessed Anthony was refreshed, relieved from his affliction, came to himself, and he turned round. He saw that all the people were asleep, and that only his friend who was sitting watching by his pillow was awake. He made a sign to him, drew near to him, and Saint Anthony said to him quietly, "Come, do an act of righteousness, lest the heart of the people should think and mankind should imagine that there is still power left in the Evil One, and should be afraid to lift up the heel against him."

The man hearkened to him, and whilst the people were quiet and asleep, he lifted him up and carried him to the tomb, and shut the door as usual. Then Saint Anthony prayed as he was lying down, for he had no power in him to stand up, and when he had multiplied his prayers, he said with a loud voice, "Where are you, O children of Gehenna? Here am I, even I, Anthony, and I will not depart from this place until you are destroyed in this place: for although you multiply tortures, I shall not be remote from the love of Christ." Then he said with a loud voice, "Though a whole legion of devils encamps against me, my heart shall not fear." These were the words, which this man, this athlete, proclaimed in his striving. Then the heart of the Enemy of righteousness melted within him, and he cried to the dogs his kinsfolk, and spoke, emitting smoke from himself as he did so, saying to them, "Did not you say to me, what shall we do to this man, this insolent fellow, who has treated us wholly with contempt and disdain? His heart is not afraid of the quaking terror, his hearing is not perturbed by words (or voices), his eye is not terrified by visions, and his body has no fear of blows. Who among you can give me counsel as to what shall be done with him?" After which they contrived the following plan.

It is very easy for the enemy to create apparitions and appearances of such a character that shall be deemed real and actual objects. Straightaway phantasms of this kind caused a phantom earthquake, and they tore apart the

four corners of the house, and entered into it in a body from all sides. One had the form of a lion, another had the appearance of a wolf, another was like a panther, and all the others were in the forms of serpents, vipers, and scorpions. The lion was roaring as a lion roars when he is about to slay; the bull was ready to gore him with his horns; the panther was prepared to spring upon him; and the snakes and the vipers were hissing, and they appeared to be in the act of hurling themselves upon him; and the sounds which they made and the forms in which they showed themselves were terrible. The blessed man Anthony was not disturbed (or frightened) by their commotion, and his mind remained wholly undisturbed. As he was lying down he laughed at these phantoms, and said, "Thus there is no power in you. You have taken to yourselves the forms of wild beasts, and if there had been any power whatsoever to do harm in you, only one would need to come against me and this would have been sufficient. But because our Lord has cut off the things which incited you to attack me, and the provocation of your wickedness has no strength, you lay plots and contrive snares, thinking that, perhaps, you will be able to make men quake by fear only. Moreover, whoever has had experience of your feebleness know that you have obtained as your helpers the mere forms and appearances of wild beasts."

Anthony also spoke to them in very great boldness of heart, saying, "If you have indeed received power over me, or if it be in your power to do me harm, do not hesitate to do it, only draw near speedily and do whatever you lust to do; but if you are unable to do anything, why do you weary yourselves in vain? For our faith in our Lord is a seal and a wall to us." Our Lord was not unmindful of the athlete Anthony, and He appeared to him after his victory. The blessed Anthony lifted up his eyes, and saw a roof-curtain drawn aside, and a ray of light descended there from upon him. Straightaway the devils dispersed in terror, the sufferings of his body were relieved, and the blessed man felt the help of our Lord near to him, and understood.

Then having waited for a space, having recovered somewhat from his tribulations, and having enjoyed rest from the graciousness of the revelation of our Lord, he lifted up his voice, and said, "O my Lord, I adore Your help. Where were You before these sufferings and tribulations came upon me?" Straightaway a voice came to him, saying, "Here I was by your side, O Anthony. I have never left you, for I remained that I might look upon your strife; but inasmuch as you have triumphed completely, and have not been broken down with sadness in your tribulations, I will be your Guide and Comforter. I will make you to be renowned as a faithful servant throughout all the earth." When these words had been heard by him, straightaway peace came upon his body, and he had rest from his afflictions. He rose up, bowed the knee, prayed, and gave thanks

to God Who had visited him. From that time onwards he perceived that he had very much greater strength in him than formerly. At that time Anthony was about thirty five years of age.

INTO THE DESERT

It came to pass that on the following morning he departed from the tomb and went forth to that solitary old monk who used to dwell by the side of the village. He tried to persuade him to go with him to the desert, but the old man excused himself from this, for one thing because of his old age and for another because he had not been in the habit of living in the desert. Indeed at that time none of the monks lived there. Immediately Anthony rose up and prayed with the old man, and he begged him to join his prayers to his that God might make his way prosperous before him; and afterwards he went forth alone into the desert.

Once again the enemy went forth after him. When Anthony was exhausted by reason of the distance of the way, he began to contend with him. When the blessed man Anthony had journeyed along the road and had arrived at the skirt of the desert, he perceived that the Enemy had cast down before him a large silver tablet. The blessed man knew that these things were of the wiles of the evil, and he made him to know that this example of his handicraft which had been fashioned by him could not cause him to err. Looking at the tablet he answered and said, "Assuredly, the evil wishes to do me evil by means of this tablet. How can it have come in the desert? This is not a frequented road, and there is no inhabited land near, and thieves do not dwell in this country; it is the handiwork of the evil. You shall not, O enemy, pervert my mind by this thing; may you and it go to damnation." Having made an end of his words the silver tablet was consumed and disappeared in the form of smoke before the fire of the words of the blessed man Anthony.

Again the devil showed him some gold, and it was real gold, and Anthony fell into anxious thought and pondered saying, "What is this thing? It is either a piece of the handiwork of the Evil, or it is a temptation from God, and a trial from Him (may His Honour be blessed!) Who has restrained me from the blandishments of the Evil One who says, 'Behold, I will show him real gold.'" The blessed man was not overthrown by it, and he esteemed the gold as filth. Anthony said to the evil, "Choose some other kind of handiwork and snare, for out of this one I have delivered myself." How that gold came or how it got there Anthony tells us not, and we, even after most careful thought, are unable to afford any information on the matter; but what Anthony saw was gold, and gold in large quantities, for the blessed man marveled at the great

abundance of it.

When the devil saw that he had protected himself by the Sign of the Cross and praying, and that he did not remove himself from his place, he stepped aside and passed away quickly in the form of a flame of fire. He neither turned nor looked at him. Anthony was particularly well armed for this species of warfare, and fought valiantly. He set out again on the road which he had been travelling. Having arrived at the desert, he went up into a mountain where there were serpents. Inasmuch as the snakes found there were very numerous, he departed from that place and came to the bank of the river, and took up his abode there. The snakes, which were there when the righteous man set his foot upon that spot, speedily gave place to him, and each one of them made the greatest possible haste to escape from him. His smell caused them to flee, and they knew that this man was not one of the people of that country.

Therefore the blessed Anthony took up his abode there by himself, shut himself in; and brought in a supply of bread once every six months (for the Egyptians were in the habit of making at one time bread sufficient even for a whole year). As for water he found that there. He went and dwelt there in a place which was like to a cleft in the rocks, with the intention of seeing no man and of being seen by none. He had his abode there for very many years; in the roof of his house there was a small opening, and through this he used to receive bread three times yearly, for the mountain in which he dwelt was remote from inhabited land. Such people as came to him, whom he could not be induced to admit into his presence remained outside, perhaps for one or two days. When they strained their ears that they might hear something, they would hear a noise like that of a mighty multitude of people, confused sounds, some of the sounds were like to the voices of men shouting loudly, some were like to great cries of lamentation, and some were those of men of war and of a mighty tumult. Among all these was a voice, which said, "Depart from us! Why have you come to our country to cause our death? Have you never heard that which your Lord spoke concerning us, saying, 'Evil spirits dwell in the desert, and in desolate places, and in the lands where there is no water?' Behold, from now on you shall know that this is our habitation; depart you, and give place to us once more."

When these words were heard, those who were outside Anthony's dwelling thought that men had entered in through the roof of his house and that they were quarrelling with him. When they had gone round about the house they found a small opening in the wall, and having looked through it they saw the blessed man alone. They understood that those voices were those of the devils who used to wage war against him. Mighty dread came upon them, and they began to cry out to the blessed man Anthony. The just man was

more ready to hearken to their words than to the tumult of the devils, and to hold converse with them, and he would draw near to the side of the door, and say to them, "Come near to me, and do not be afraid." Having conversed with them graciously, and filled their hearts, he would dismiss them in peace, and admonish them, saying, "Be afraid neither of sounds (or voices) nor of phantoms of this kind, for in this way the devils are accustomed to act; towards those who are timid; but seal you yourselves with the Seal of the Cross, and return to your homes in confidence, and forgive those who would make of you laughing-stocks." They were dismissed in peace. As for Anthony himself he had dwelt in strife with the devils for a long time past, and was very courageous, and the strength which was in him was added to in proportion as he saw that his enemies were vanquished.

THE FAME OF THE HOLY MAN

When the report of the kind of strife in which he lived reached his friends and acquaintances, they set out to go to him, for they thought that they would certainly find him dead; and having arrived at the place where they wished to be, they came to the side of his house and inclined their ears at the door that perhaps they might hear any sound or breathing inside. They heard a sound like the voice of one who played a harp and said, "Let God arise, and let all His enemies be scattered, and let all those who hate Him flee before Him; let them be destroyed, even as smoke is made to disappear, and as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God. Again, all the nations compassed me round about, and in the Name of the Lord I destroyed them." The blessed Anthony lived in this habitation about twenty years.

It came to pass that in the process of time his fame reached all the monks who were in Egypt, and all the other folk who did not lead the life of the ascetic and recluse, and men of distinction, and monks in Egypt began to come to him in large numbers. The Egyptian monks came that they might copy the manner of his life and deeds, and the laity came that he might pray over them, and might heal certain of them of their sicknesses. One day, a multitude of people had come there in a large group to see him and they had begged him repeatedly to speak to them. But he had never then answered a word. They lifted the door out of its socket, and threw themselves down on their faces before him, and made supplication to him and pacified him, and then each man among them stood up, and made known his request to him. Having gone out to them even like a man who goes forth from the depths of the earth, they saw that his appearance was like to that of an angel of light, they marveled why it was that his body had not been weakened by all his confinement, why

it was that his understanding had not become feeble, why, on the contrary, his appearance, his bodily stature, and his countenance were then as they had known them always to have been in the times which were past.

When he saw a large concourse of people he was not disturbed, and when they brought their petitions to him, he was not moved to impatient anger, but he remained in a placid and thoughtful state, for the Living Word was to him a guide. Among those who came to him, there were many who were indeed very sorely afflicted, and our Lord healed them by the hand of the blessed man. Moreover, God gave him such a measure of grace in his speech that every man was wholly gratified, for those who were in affliction and distress were encouraged to endure, those who were occupied with contention were quieted, those who were afflicted sorely became long-suffering, the haughty were made humble, and the arrogant were brought low, in order that every man might learn the doctrine of righteousness. For he used to say, "That we should possess anything besides Christ is unnecessary, and we should not esteem anything of value besides the love of Christ, neither possessions nor kinsfolk, not even our soul itself. For if God did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up on account of our sins, how much the more is it right for us, having tasted and known Divine grace, to give our souls not on His behalf, for such a thing is not required from us, but on behalf of our own lives!" By these words he used to persuade many to withdraw themselves from this world, and from its tribulation, and to take refuge in a habitation of monks.

A WORD FROM ATHANASIUS ON PERSEVERANCE

He began to increase from that time with Christ in simple mindedness, in love towards strangers, and in longsuffering. These things not only go with us, but they also go before us, and they make ready for us a place in the country of the humble and meek, and no man should lack them, especially when he knows the will of his Lord, and that he is bound to prepare himself according to His will. Would any servant dare to stand before his master's face and say to him, "Yesterday I toiled, but today I have done nothing at all?" Or have we not heard what our Lord said in the Gospel, "When a servant has toiled nobly and has labored in the work which is outside, as soon as he has gone inside he shall weave a place for his hands and shall minister to his Lord, and then happiness shall be his?" Since we have heard these things from the Divine Books, what reason can we have for being without the fear of God? Was it not for this that Ezekiel the Prophet was made a watchman? Did not Judas, because of the one night in which he produced wickedness, lose the labor of all his days?

Let us continue to be strenuous then, O children of our profession, and let

it not become wearisome to us, for our Lord has been made a guide to us and to every man who has a desire for the virtues. And that it may not be tedious to us, the blessed Paul became an example to us before, and said, "I die daily." If we were to think each day that we had to die that day, we should never sin at all, and this is the explanation of the word which was spoken. If when it is morning we were to imagine that we should never arrive at the evening, and if also when it is evening we thought that we should never arrive at the morning we should never sin; by this thought also the nature of our life would teach us that it is not a matter for confidence. If therefore we were to prepare our mind in this manner, and if we were to live with this thought within us, we should never be overcome by sin, and the lust which is fleeting would not reign over us, and we should not keep anger against a fellow creature in the flesh, and we should not love the possessions which pass away, and we should forgive every man who offended us. The lust for women would die in the heart, for how could it be ministered to? For at all times everything which is greater than its fellow overcomes its fellow and the fear of God exalts itself above everything.

Therefore, O my beloved, let us be zealous in carrying out the work to which we have once bound our selves, and let us travel to the end on the road on which we have begun to journey, and let no man among us look behind him, lest we be like to the wife of Lot. It is not easy for him that shall turn behind him, after he has received the doctrine of righteousness, to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He that turns back, whatever be the way in which he turns, will repent of what he has done, and he will turn to the elements of this world, even as a dog to his vomit. Do not therefore be afraid as if you were carrying a heavy burden, for the burden of our Lord is easy and light, to those who desire it; if therefore we have the desire, everything is easy to us. The children of this world travel over the seas and make journeys across difficult countries in order that they may learn profane wisdom, in the doctrine of which the means of righteousness is not employed, and in the praise of which there is no profit of life. But we do not desire either to set out on a journey or to travel on the sea for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, for our Lord declared before, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." So therefore, O my beloved, life is in our own hands to gain, for it is within us, and it is ministered to by us. For the soul by its nature possesses the perception of the understanding, and therefore our soul has knowledge of what our life is; it is prepared by the nature of its creation, and is ready for everything which it wishes. Therefore also Joshua, the son of Nun, commanded the people, saying, "Prepare your hearts before the God of Israel," and John also said, "Prepare your ways." When the Book decrees the preparation of the soul, it wishes that the rectitude of the nature of its first creation shall be in it, but when it goes

forth outside its limit it is condemned by the Book like the Evil One.

Therefore, the matter is not a difficult one to us. For, if we remain in that which we were created from the beginning, life is in us and with us; and our mind also condemns us, when it thinks evil and has envy of the thoughts, and brings forth a deed of injury in an unseemly manner. Everything, therefore, is given into our own power to do, and there is no master set over us to command us what we shall do. Moreover, there is no man who can restrain us either from thinking or doing fair things; whether we live or whether we die belongs to ourselves. For if we desire to withdraw ourselves from thoughts of the wicked and from usurers and pledges, let us take heed diligently and guard for our Lord the liberty, which has been given to us without blemish, as something, which we have received from the beginning, and let us be faithful children to the Lord. Therefore, take you heed, O my beloved sons, that you keep not silence like those who have been brought low through sin, or by wrath or by lust. For it is written that the anger of a man perfects not the righteousness of God, and besides, lust conceives and brings forth sin, and when sin has been performed completely, it brings forth death.

In this way, O my beloved, let us lead the life of watchfulness and strenuousness, even as it is written, "Keep your heart with all diligence." For we have cunning and crafty enemies, and it is against these that our strife must be, even as the Apostle said, "Our contending is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against those who are masters of the world of darkness, which is beneath the heavens." Their contending against us is very frequent, and there is no rest from their attacks upon us. Even between the devils there is a distinction, but concerning their nature and concerning this difference it would be a labor to narrate; we will, however, here reveal and describe very briefly those things which are necessary to be learnt concerning their contending against us, and their temptations, and their blandishments (or, flatteries), and, in short, the whole system of their cunning.

ATHANASIUS UNCOVERS THE METHODS OF THE DEVIL

Before this, however, it is proper for us to learn that the beings which are called devils were not created that they might be devils, for there is nothing evil in the works of God, and even they were created beautiful beings. But when they turned aside from the mind of righteousness, or from the heavenly understanding, they were removed to a distance from the place where they lived. Seeing that they were cast away by the exalted Will, they drew near and mingled among the created beings of this world, and they made the heathen to go astray wholly according to their desire; and against us, because they have

envy of us, they multiply their contending that, perhaps, they may be able to turn us out of the way of the truth of the kingdom of heaven, and that we may not attain to the country from where they were swept out and fell. Therefore the labor of prayer and of abundant supplication is necessary for us, that through the Divine Providence, and through the gift which we have received from the Holy Spirit, we may be able to know what distinction exists between the evil spirits, and what each one of them has been commanded to seek after, and by what manner of means the destruction of every one of them is to be brought about. For their cunning is very great, placing the mesh of their net in everything. Therefore the blessed Apostle and the rest of the righteous men, who like him had experience of and had tried the Tempter in everything, declared, "The artifices of the evil shall not overcome us." I will narrate something of what I have endured from them, and a little of the vast knowledge which I have of them and like the beloved Prophets, I will tell what I understand about them.

The whole race of devils is beyond measure an envious one, and it is altogether jealous of all mankind, and particularly of the monks, for they cannot bear to see heavenly deeds wrought and heavenly lives led upon the earth, and they, therefore, make hidden pits and snares for us, as it is written, "They have laid their nets over my paths." The word their "nets" means thoughts of iniquity. Let us, however, be not afraid of their stirrings, and let us not be made lax by reason of their flatteries; but let us be constant in fasting and in prayer, and straightaway they shall be vanquished and disappear. Now when they depart, let us not be confident and say, "Behold, they are put to shame, and we are freed from them," for this race of beings can never be put to shame, and they know not how to blush. Even whilst their temptations are being brought to nothing on this side, they make an attack upon us on the other; and when they have examined and tried by what means our understanding may be flattered or terrified, they plan numerous schemes to deceive us. Now the devils are in the habit of leading men astray by declaring something such as the following: "Behold, we will inform you concerning the things which are about to take place." And then they show them mighty phantoms which reach up to the ceilings, so that by means of these similarities they may lead astray those whom they are not able to injure in their minds.

It is quite unnecessary that we who are believers should be terrified either by the motions of the various species of devils, or by the various forms which they take, and we should not be afraid of their voices, which are angry and threatening at one time, and which are flattering at another. For the devil is a liar, and there is no truth either in his words or his deeds. But although mankind once gave him power, and sin lifted up its horn, our Lord has now

broken his sting. He has humbled it and brought it down beneath our feet; and it has been made a thing for the Gentiles to trample upon, and a laughing-stock to the nations. This is the proof that the matter is thus, and righteousness testifies that it has been performed in creation, for behold, he who, in his error, has exalted himself in his heart, who boasts that he can dry up the sea, who can parcel out the dry land, does not have the power to destroy the heavenly mind which is in the monks, and he is unable to turn so small and unimportant a creature as myself from speaking about him. The devils are cunning, but they can only lead astray those upon whom they find an opportunity for exercising their powers. They appear in all kinds of forms, and it happens that the evil even demands for himself the form of righteousness, as it is written, "Satan even takes upon himself the form of an angel of light."

There is a time when we see no man and yet the sound of the working of the devils is heard by us, and it is like the singing of a song in a loud voice; and there are times when the words of the Scriptures are heard by us, just as if a living man were repeating them, and they are exactly like the words which we should hear if a man were reading the Book. And it also happens that they rouse us up to the night prayer, and incite us to stand on our feet; and they make us to see also the shapes of monks and the forms of those who mourn (i.e. the anchorites); and they draw near to us as if they had come from a long journey, that they may make lax the understanding of those who are feeble of soul, and they begin to utter words like to these, "Are we condemned throughout all creation to love places of desolation? Or, were we not able, when we came to our houses, to fear God and to do fair deeds?" When they are unable to work their will by means of a scheme of this kind, they cease from this kind of deceit and turn to another and say, "How now is it possible for you to live? For you have sinned and committed iniquity in many things. Do you think that the spirit has not revealed to me what has been done by you, or that I do not know that you have done such and such a thing?" If, therefore, a simple brother hear these things, and feels within himself that he has done evil as the devil has said, and he is not acquainted with his craftiness, his mind will be troubled straightaway, and shall fall into despair and turn backwards.

It is then, O my beloved, unnecessary for us to be terrified at these things, and we have need to fear only when the devils multiply the speaking of the things which are true, and then we must rebuke them severely. For even in the days of our Redeemer, when they spoke to Him the things which were true, He rebuked them and made them to hold their peace, lest they should mingle their wickedness with the truth that was in the words which they were speaking. We must then not even appear to incline our hearing to their words, even though they are words of truth which they utter; for it would be a disgrace

to us that those who have rebelled against God should become our teachers. And let us, O my brethren, arm ourselves with the armour of righteousness, and let us put on the helmet of redemption, and in the time of contending let us shoot out from a believing mind spiritual arrows as from a bow which is stretched. For they are nothing at all, and even if they were, their strength has in it nothing which would enable it to resist the might of the Cross. Whatever they do, they do like thieves and robbers, and not after the manner of soldiers, for they have not the strength to stand up and to contend for any length of time. They shout, and wrangle, and make tumultuous noises and commotions, that, perhaps, by means of the sheer fright which they themselves inspire, they may be able to lead away captive weak minds and to make them do their will. If they had the power to perform anything, or to do any harm whatever, so much tumult and outcry and trouble would be unnecessary, and if one of them only were to come, he could perform by himself that which he had been assigned to do. For when the angel of truth was sent by the Lord of creation against the camp of the Assyrians he had no need of many companions, and he came not with tumult and terror, but with quietness and firmness he made use of the power which had been given to him, and destroyed one hundred and eighty and five thousand of the Assyrians. But the assembly of the evil ones, because it does not possess the power of performing its own will, makes use of means which are full of terror.

If any man shall say, "Supposing the devils have no power in them, by what agency did they bring upon Job all the calamities which are written in the Book?" Let him understand that he must think in this way, that is to say, he must believe that the Evil One has no power to do harm, and that God only gave power to tempt him into his hands. For if this were not so, He would not have stripped him of everything, and He would have had compassion upon his soul, but mercy is not found with the Evil One. In this way must a man think. Moreover, the Evil One appears to have been particularly feeble, inasmuch as the just man vanquished him in the contest, which he waged with a man; yet this is not a matter for wonder, my beloved, for Job the just was not given over wholly into the hands of the evil. Know that unless God had so wished, the Evil One would neither have had power over Job himself, nor over his herds and his flocks, nor over the miserable wealth of those who were spectators of him if a man may speak thus. And that the matter is thus is shown from the blessed Gospel, for when our Lord restrained and pursued the devils in one place, they besought Him to permit them to enter into a herd of swine which was near to them. If now the devils had not power over the swine, how much less can they have power over man, who was made in the image of God? So therefore in proportion as it is necessary for us to increase our fear of God,

it is meeting for us to add to the contempt which we should have for the congregation of the evil ones.

In what way can we increase our fear of God? Or in what way are we able to add to our contempt for the evil ones? The means by which both these things are to be performed are similar in each case. Whenever we make our life and deeds better than they were before, we increase the pleasure, which we give to God, and we also multiply the contempt, which we have for the evil ones. For the devils are far more afraid of the fasting of the monks, and of their prayers, and of their chastity, and of their abstinence, and of their meekness, and of their gentleness, than they are of their triumphs, and they are afraid most of all of their righteousness, which is in Christ. All these virtues pierce them on every side after the manner of arrows, and for this reason they do all they can, and they become mad and foam at the mouth, that, if they can help it, they may not arrive at this condition of disgrace.

Therefore do not give them an opportunity in any matter whatsoever, neither when they come against us in the guise of enemies in wars, nor when under the form of friends they attempt to flatter us; for they are accustomed to draw near to us in the guise of friends and to pretend to reveal matters to us. At one time they will come to us and inform us before hand concerning the coming of the brethren, and at another we hear from them also rumours and reports of things which are remote. When, therefore, it happens that they tell us of something which is going to happen, and it comes to pass, let us not be surprised. For it is not a great thing, seeing that they themselves are spirits in their persons, that they should see and perceive the brethren who are coming to us, and should tell us beforehand of their coming, and should make known a matter which has happened in a certain place. Now these things a runner who is swift in his course could do, and also a horseman who rides rapidly. Therefore, let us not be led away after their deeds through such things, and let us neither marvel at them nor think that they are matters of importance, for that they are not things which have not been done already has been made known before; but to reveal secret things and to make known before what is to be performed are matters which are in the hands of God only.

Know, however, O my beloved, that they have made known to many who were afar off the fortune of this our present congregation, and all matters which were in dispute; and of what I have said the following words will afford a proof and an explanation. It has happened by chance that a man has set out from India, or from some remote country to us, and when as yet we did not see him, or know anything about him, straightaway we have had sight of him and have heard where he was prepared to go, for immediately the devils seized upon the news quickly and brought it to us saying, "Behold, such and such a

man from such and such a place is coming to you.” It has happened, moreover, that the man who was coming was a king, or that some obstacle has prevented him from coming, whoever he was, or that having travelled a certain distance, which was not little, he returned to his own country, but nevertheless the shameful and reprehensible craftiness of the devils had found it out.

Thus it is also in the case of the waters of the river Nile, which is in our country, for they inform us beforehand whenever they are going to rise. Whenever they see the clouds and the abundant rain which falls in India (now this river Nile comes from that country), they know and see that by reason of the storm that has taken place in India, the river will be full from one bank to the other, when the final rise of the waters of the Nile will come they declare beforehand, and thus they lead astray the souls of various people who lack understanding. The inhabitants India also if they had the power to travel, as the devils have, would come and announce the rise of the waters of the Nile to the people who are in Egypt.

The matter is like that of the watchman when he goes up to some high place in the sight of the whole camp and is able to see him that is coming before he arrives; but he who comes is also able to afford exact information concerning what is coming and what are the contents of his dispatch, and what is the condition of the nation from which he comes. In like manner do the devils see or hear and give information concerning what they see and hear beforehand. Now if God meditates anything concerning the waters of the river, for He has power over it, the cunning of the devils is rebuked in the opinion of the wise, but to those who lack understanding of the heart their error is sweet. By such means of error as these paganism made its way throughout creation, but the Lord of created things came and rebuked him that did these things, and humbled his spirit; and behold, the earth is cultivated by the law of righteousness, and by the sword of the Spirit; and behold, the thorns, and the briars, and all the weeds of the seed of the evil have been rooted out from there. Such are the means, which are made use of by the error of the devils, and with such forms as these do they lead astray creation.

Supposing there be among you, O my children, any man who shall say, “Behold, do not the devils declare many things which they have not before heard, and do not they describe many things which they have not before seen?” Even if this be so, O my beloved, let not your minds be disturbed by it; but enter into the counsel of your mind, and get understanding concerning the things of this world, and from these you will obtain the power of preserving your minds free from storms. Before all things know that the physicians, by means of the experience which they have received from their handicraft, are able to know of a certainty before a man falls sick whether he will live or die,

and how long the sickness will last, and when it will be at an end. It happens that, even when a man himself has no idea that he is about to pass under afflictions, the physicians from their constant practice and from the experience which they have acquired, are able to inform him concerning the sicknesses which are about to come upon him, even when the first symptoms of it have not declared themselves. Now the power of foretelling things is even greater with those who steer ships than with the physicians, for they have experience of the heavens and of the wind which is in it, and they are able to declare several days beforehand on what day the heavens will change, and at what periods the wind will become strong, and these things they can do by their knowledge and by their experience. And know you also that the ability of the devils is not superior to that of helmsmen and physicians, for they also by their experience of matters are able to declare what they have never before heard, and to describe what they have never before seen. To you these devils and the supplication which is made to them are superfluities. Let those who are without them seek these things, but seek not freedom from there and let it be to you an object to finish your work.

For who has commanded us that we should be strenuous in this matter, and should know it? Who among the men of ancient time received praise because they had knowledge of events before they happened? Who among them was ever blamed because he had no knowledge of events, which were afar off, or were about to take place immediately? Each one of us will, however, be judged if he does not perform the work of righteousness, and not because he knows or does not know the things of the future. Therefore let us excuse our-selves from this supplication, and let us pray, not that we may know secret things, but that we may please the Divine Majesty, and that power may be given to us to stand against the darts of the Evil One. And if we also desire to know hidden things, this too is in our own hands, and we must purify our heart as a habitation for the Holy Spirit, and behold, He will abide and rest in us, and by the rays of light which proceed from Him, our eyes will be able to see hidden things from remote distances. Did not Elisha, who was a man like to ourselves, through the purity of his heart see that which his eyes had never seen?

You must then make a distinction between the things of the Holy Spirit, and the things of the congregation of the Evil One. And perhaps you will say, "How are we to make the distinction?" First of all, pray and make supplication to the Revealer of secret things that He will make you to possess the power of distinguishing between these matters; and for the rest I myself am bound to impart to you gladly, as my sons, whatsoever I have learned from a long experience. The visions and revelations of the Holy Spirit are not of a terrifying or tumultuous charmer, for they take place under conditions of rest and

tranquility, and in like manner also with gentle pleasure and quiet satisfaction does the soul feel the rise of the Holy Spirit within it, for it is not His habit to put terror into people or to produce trembling where He makes Himself to be seen. Look into the Scriptures and they will inform you in what manner the revelation of the Spirit takes place, and they will show you that it takes place in restfulness, and gladness, and peace. These are the ways of the revelation of the Spirit, and whenever it is brought about, it is done in this manner. And if, after the manner of men, a man may be straightaway terrified or greatly moved through the love of the thing itself, or through the beauty of the revelation, and through the quietness and pleasure which are caused by it, in due season the fear or terror will come to an end, and comfort and gladness will come to him in its place, even as Gabriel wrought for Zachariah, and according to what the other angels did for the blessed women at the grave of our Lord, and the angel who appeared to the shepherds and proclaimed to them the good news of the birth of our Redeemer. You will find many other instances, which are like to these in the Scriptures if you seek for them. If the soul be terrified or be afraid by reason of those visions, it does not follow that such fright is caused by the evil, for it may, perhaps, arise in it because the soul thinks itself unworthy of the heavenly revelation which has been given to it. This then is the manner of the revelation of the knowledge of the truth.

Fright of the Evil One comes about in this wise. First of all the soul is disturbed and terrified, and it hears the sounds of a great tumult, and of the playing of musical instruments, and of singing, which are like to those made at a feast of drunken men and in the caves of robbers; and because of these sounds which it hears, the timid soul is greatly moved; and for this reason it becomes afraid. Other souls, which are brave, are terrified because they have heard strange sounds, for all their affairs in every possible way belong to tribulation and misery. There is a time when they seek after the forms of the persons of the children of men in very truth, and although they do thus, it is well known that it is merely a phantom and the form of a man only which they obtain. For however much an Indian were to rub himself, he could never make himself resemble a Greek, and similarly with Satan, however many forms of the children of men he might steal for himself in order to enable him to declare to those who beheld him that the truth was with him, and to lead into error the children of the truth, and however much the phantom might resemble the reality, that it could be compared with it is impossible. There is therefore no room for the devils to lead us into error by any one of these things, and whatsoever they do, they do to their own disgrace.

Understand also the following matter, and learn briefly concerning it, that is to say, in the revelation of the Spirit, and in the tumult caused by devils in

the soul, fear is vouchsafed. In respect of the devils, however, they can certainly stir up in us a tumult, and put terror therein, but they cannot turn them away and make an end of them. Whilst the Holy Spirit is revealing Himself to a man, the soul is greatly moved by the majesty of it, but the terror which it has of Him comes to an end speedily, and perfect happiness makes its abode in him.

Thus are the ways and crafts of the Evil One, but, even according to the things which I have already said, let us not be moved by the fear which he causes, and let us not be terrified at his visions, and let us not turn to him and make ourselves subject to him so that he may say to us, "Fall down and worship me." By his crafts he has led the heathen into error, and they imagine that he is God, but the fearers of our Lord have prevented us, and they have gathered us into His habitation, and thus there is not given to him an opportunity of leading us into captivity. For the evil is exceedingly bold, and he is without shame, and he even dared to approach our Lord in his madness and depravity, that is to say, the body which He had put on; and our Lord looked upon him and scorned him, and rebuked him, and said, "Get behind Me, Satan: for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'" Through the consolation of these things especially the evil should be held in contempt in our sight; for the word which was spoken by our Lord to Satan was spoken on our behalf and on account of us, that in the same manner we ourselves might also rebuke the devils, and that as the evil was destroyed before the word of our Lord, so he might also perish and come to an end before our words, for in this he cannot multiply boasting.

When our word has power over the devils, and they run terrified from before us, let no man marvel when he rebukes the demons and they become subject to him, and let him not hold in contempt another man by whose hands a similar thing cannot be wrought. Rather let him examine first of all and understand the lives and works of various men, and from this scrutiny let him know with whom abides Divine Grace, and where the righteousness of God rests. For they will be to us a very much better mirror than those who cast out devils, and in them the wicked will be able to see their blemishes and so become rebuked, and in them good men will be able to look carefully at their career and become strengthened. Whether a man becomes a prosperous toiler or an abject coward belongs to himself, but for a man to stretch out his hand against the devils and for them to yield anything belongs not to him but to heavenly Grace. For when the Disciples returned with joy to their Lord from preaching the Gospel which they had been sent out to preach, they rejoiced in that even the devils were obedient to their words. Therefore let him that has discernment look and hearken to this answer which was given

to them, "Do not rejoice because the devils also have been made subject to you, but rejoice because your names have been written down in heaven." For names to be written down in the Book of Life is a testimony to that which is pleasing to God, and it shouts that those who are worthy of this thing have an upright mind; but power over devils is, manifestly, a mark of the grace of our Redeemer. That you may know that this is so, observe what Christ answered those who took refuge in this thing when the spirits were going forth before Him, and they said to Him, "In Your Name we have cast out devils, and have performed many signs and wonders." He said to them, "Verily, verily, I say to you I do not know you." Therefore let us pray, as I have already said, that there may be given to us the grace to seek after the power to distinguish between spirits, according to the word of the Book which said, "Do not be led astray by the spirits which err."

CONCERNING THE TRIUMPHS OF SAINT ANTHONY

I merit praise in that whilst repeating the triumphs of the blessed Anthony I desire to keep silence concerning many things, being at the same time very careful not to speak anything on mine own authority only; it is sufficient for me to record the things which actually took place. Let no man imagine that we declare these things as a pastime, but let him be sure that we narrate them as things which took place in very truth, and that we do so knowing from actual experience that they are true, and that we are only placing on record the wonderful acts of the blessed man that they may form a small memorial of him. Let the wise man know the purity of our intention and that we do not narrate the things which have been said by us in this history without a good object. We shall be made strong by the measure of your love. For I am convinced that it would be neither useful nor beneficial if matters of this kind were spoken of in a boastful manner, because our adversary is very crafty, and it might happen that he could cause us to stumble even in a thing which concerns the truth. Therefore, whilst recording the narrative of the histories of the crafts and arts of the devil, it is right that we should make you to be watchful against his subtlety.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF SAINT ANTHONY:

How often then did they ascribe blessings in a loud voice, and whilst the voice of blessing was reaching my ears, the words of cursing were sent forth by them! For how many times did they inform me beforehand concerning the flood of the Nile, that is to say, of the river Gihon, and how many times did I say to

them, "And, as for you what have you?" I used to say to them, "I have no need to learn these things from you," but they would come again to me after this in the guise of thieves, and they would surround me, and would stand up and utter threats against me, having at the same time their weapons upon them. Again, on another occasion they were suddenly found filling my house with serpents of various kinds, and with reptiles in large numbers, and with these there were also horses which neighed; then straightaway I made myself ready and I stood up and I lifted up my voice in Psalms, and said, "Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will be strong in the Name of the Lord our God." Immediately they came to an end and disappeared from before me. On another occasion they came to me by night, and they were holding torches of fire and were saying, "We have come now to burn you alive, O Anthony. And as they were saying these things to me, I closed my eyes so that I might show them that I had placed their light in the portion of darkness; and straightaway I put on the armour of prayer against them, and whilst I was praying the light of the sinful ones was extinguished, and it was no more.

Again, after a few months they came in the guise of the singers of the Psalms, and they began to speak to me with words from the Scriptures; but I, like a deaf man, did not hearken to them. On another occasion they shook down upon me the habitation in which I was living, but I laughed at them by reason of my confidence which was placed in our Lord, and my mind was in no way whatsoever disturbed by them. After this they came to me with whistling, and they were beating their hands together and dancing with joy; but when they saw that notwithstanding all their glamour I did not cease to pray, and that I held not my peace from the singing of Psalms, like to men who have been defeated and overcome they turned their songs of joy into lamentations, and they began to wail and to beat their breasts in grief. And at the same time I gave thanks to my good Lord for all these things, and because He had broken, and destroyed, and brought low, and humbled, their audacious arrogance and mad folly.

Again, on another occasion, there appeared to me a devil of an exceedingly haughty and insolent appearance, and he stood up before me with the tumultuous noise of many people, and he dared to say to me, "I, even I, am the power of God, and I, even I, am the Lord of the worlds." He said to me, "What do you wish me to give you? Ask and you shall receive." Then I blew a puff of wind at him, and I rebuked him in the Name of Christ, and I made ready to strike him, and when, as I thought, I did strike him, at that very moment all his strength, and all his host of fiends, at the mention of the Name of Christ, came to an end.

Once, when I was fasting, the crafty one appeared to me in the form of a

brother monk carrying bread, and he began to speak to me words of counsel, saying, "Rise up, and satisfy your heart with bread and water, and rest a little from your excessive labors, for you are a man, and however much you may be exalted, you are clothed with a mortal body, and you should fear sicknesses and tribulations." Then I regarded his words, and I held my peace and refrained from giving him an answer. I bowed myself down in quietness and I began to make supplication in prayer, and I said, "O Lord, make an end of him as You have always done at all times." As I concluded my words he came to an end and vanished like dust, and went forth from the door like smoke.

Again, how very many times in the desert has he shown me things like phantoms which resembled gold in order that I might bow myself down before him and touch him even with my finger. I, however, never ceased from singing the songs of the Holy Spirit. How very many times when I was receiving enjoyment in the Holy Spirit did he disturb me in anger, and he even dared so far as to strike me! Not that I myself am of any account whatsoever, but that it may be seen that the power of our Lord is mighty, and that it cannot be vanquished even in the feeble ones who believe in Him. And Satan laid upon me cruel blows, and in proportion as he multiplied them I kept crying out with a loud voice, saying, "There is nothing which shall separate me from the love of God." After these words had been said, Satan and the members of his host fell one upon the other, and each of them vented his wrath upon his fellow. It was God, who previously reduced Satan to subjection, and God alone who performed all these things which I have related. And the Book says, "I saw Satan like lightning fall from heaven." I, O my sons, remember the word of the Apostle, who said, "I have spoken these things for your behalf, both for myself and for Apollos, that you may learn of us." In this wise you also must learn of me these things which you have heard, and you shall not be wearied in running your course, and you shall not fear the appearances (or visions) of Satan and of all his hosts. Even though I, like a simple man, have made use of these histories, it is for you to hold them to be true; for it is right that we should bring forward in this place whatever we remember, lest under one pretext or another, or by some means or other, Satan draw near to you, and that you may find yourselves ready to fight against all his schemes.

Once Satan approached the house one night and knocked at the door, and I went out to see who was knocking, I lifted up my eyes and saw the form of an exceedingly tall and strong man. Having asked him, "Who are you?" He answered and said to me, "I am Satan." After this I said to him, "What do you seek?" and he answered and said to me, "Why do the monks, and the anchorites, and the other Christians revile me, and why do they at all times heap curses upon me?" Having clasped my head firmly in wonder at his mad

folly, I said to him, "Why do you give them trouble?" Then he answered and said to me, "It is not I who trouble them, but it is they who trouble themselves. For it happened to me on a certain occasion that had I not cried out to them that I was the Enemy, his slaughters would have come to an end forever. I have, therefore, no place to dwell in, and not one glittering sword, and not even people who are really subject to me, for those who are in service to me hold me wholly in contempt. Moreover, I have to keep them in fetters, for they do not cleave to me because they esteem it right to do so, and they are ever ready to escape from me in every place. The Christians have filled the whole world, and behold, even the desert is filled full with their monasteries and habitations. Let them then take good heed to themselves when they heap abuse upon me."

Then, wondering at the grace of our Lord, I said to him, "How does it happen that whilst you have been a liar on every other occasion, at this present the truth is spoken by you? How is it that you speak the truth now when you are known to utter lies? It is indeed true that when Christ came into this world you were brought down to the lowest depths, and that the root of your error was plucked up from the earth." When Satan heard the Name of Christ, his form vanished and his words came to an end. Since, therefore, Satan himself confessed that there was nothing in his power, we are compelled wholly to despise him and his host. Such then are the crafts and arts, which are found with the Enemy and with the greedy dogs which form his host. Having learned the feebleness and helplessness of it, it is right that we should make ourselves ready to march against them as over a road which our Lord has trodden for us.

Let then these phantoms be a help to us so that our minds may not be frightened by his cunning, and fear may not abide in us by reason of his impudence. And let not anxious thought be provoked in us, lest the evil one gain greater strength, and let us not be afraid when he hurls his darts at us, lest this thing be an occasion to him for boasting. Let us not be like stricken men, but let us be prepared at all times to act as men who have vanquished the enemy; and let this thought be with us at all times, namely, that God, Who has revealed and exposed the powers and dominion, is with us at all times. For otherwise when the evil ones draw near to us, having made ready to come against us in the hope that they may gain some advantage over us, or may discover some thoughts of fear in us, they prepare phantoms which appear to us in the event that they may find that we are terrified and afraid. And straightway, like thieves who have discovered a place which is without guardians, they will enter into us and will lead us captives of their will, and our miserable souls will be found to be in an agitated state, not by reason of the punishment of the Adversary, but through our own sluggishness. If,

however, the evil ones find us in the love of Christ, and meditating continually on the hope of that which is to come, and thinking thoughts concerning the commandments of our Lord, and believing that the kingdom and dominion are His, and that the evil one has neither opportunity nor power to resist the might of the Cross, if, I say, the evil one shall find any believing man in this state of mind when he draws near to him, at that very moment he will remove himself from him to a distance.

It was in such a frame of mind that he found Job who was prepared to resist him, and the evil one feared, and was ashamed, and he departed from him as from a man of war. On the other hand, he led captive to his will wholly Judah whom he found to be entirely destitute of such matters. Let us learn then fully from such examples and from such narratives, that if we wish to do so it is very easy for us to hold in contempt the evil. Let us meditate at all times on our Lord, and let our souls rejoice in His hope, and behold, we shall find that the evil will vanish from before us like the darkness, and we shall also discover that those who come to persecute us will turn their backs upon us like men who are chased out of the battle, for, as I have already told you, they are cowards. For the decree of judgement is at all times before them, and they are ever expecting the punishment which is prepared for them, and the fear of the Cross is cast upon them in proportion to their impudent audacity.

Let then these and all the other things which I have said to you, become the means of understanding the insolent cunning of the evil, and of recognizing the forms of his appearances. If it happens, therefore, to any of you that the appearance of one of these forms presents itself, do not be terrified, but look upon it with great courage as it really is, and ask it, "Who are you? Where from do you come?" If it be a true revelation of the Holy Spirit, straightaway the mind will feel that it is so, and will have confidence, and courage will grow in you and fear will diminish; but if it be an appearance of the error of the devil, the thing will be confounded. There will be no opportunity for it to be bold. The form of the appearance will not tarry, and the question which you ask will make manifest the courage of the confidence of refuge in our Lord.

On one occasion a manifestation revealed itself to Joshua, the son of Nun, and he asked him who he was, and took his stand upon the question. Similarly Daniel also saw one of the Watchers and rejoiced at the sight, and was afraid at the measure of the honour of him that had come, but he was wholly comforted by the grace of the confidence which he had in his truth. Similarly, revelation of the truth came to each and every one of the saints of ancient time, and none of the schemes of the phantoms of the wicked one ever led them astray.

As the blessed man Anthony was saying these things, and every man was hearkening to him with gladness, to every man who listened to him was given

help of one kind or another according to his need. The man who was strong found his strenuousness to be increased, and the man who was weak found that he received encouragement, and the proud man found that his arrogance was overthrown and swept away, and every man was persuaded to reach forward confidently towards the hope which is to come. All the people with one accord ascribed blessing to the righteous man Anthony because such a degree of strength had been given to him, and because such great wisdom had made its abode in him, and because that in the fierce strife and warfare which he waged against devils he was able to distinguish and discern the difference between good and evil appearances, and the revelations of our Lord from those which belonged to devils.

THE BLESSINGS OF SAINT ANTHONY

In the days of the blessed man the habitations of the monks were accepted as tabernacles of praises, Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. And love and righteousness rejoiced therein, and there was found the rest of prayer coupled with fasting. The monks toiled in the labor of their hands that they might not be a burden upon any man, and of the proceeds of the sweat of their faces the poor and the needy were relieved. The monastery of Anthony became at that time a wonder to the inhabitants of the country, for behold, the silver, the gold, and the riches of this world which were so highly esteemed in their sight were despised and accounted as waste by such men as the monks there. And those at whose wastefulness, drunkenness, and lasciviousness the monks marveled, returned to their homes in wonder as if they had seen angels and not human beings. No sounds of dissension or contention were heard there, and no voice of the violent man or of his gaoler sounded in these.

Well might a man describe that monastery in the words of the parable which was uttered in ancient time, and say, "How fair are your habitations, O Jacob, and your tabernacles, O Israel!" For the country was as if the desert had been roofed over, and it was like a paradise which was by the rivers, and tabernacles which the Lord had established, and like cedars by the side of the stream.

Therefore the blessed man, according to his desire, withdrew himself and departed to his cell, and there like a mighty man he triumphed in the apparel of war. At all seasons he was mindful of the mansions which were in the heavens, and groaned, for his mind was between two worlds. He despised the world and held it in contempt, and his mind longed greatly for the kingdom of God, for already, even according to the word of the Apostle, he wished to be with his Lord. Moreover, he was greatly troubled when the time drew near in which

it was proper for him to eat and drink with the sons of his habitation, for he was abashed, and he would depart from their midst, and he did not like any man to see him eating or drinking. Nevertheless, although he felt thus at the appointed season, he would eat with them. On the greater number of days the love which he bore towards the brethren would in this way draw him to their company, for he did not desire to grieve them in any way whatsoever, and he was as careful for them as if they had been himself. For he was mindful of the word of the Book which said: "You are members, each of the other, and if one member be glorified, the whole body is glorified."

This he used to say and teach to them, "It is right that we should at all times follow after the food of the soul, for the soul works together with our spirit in the striving which is against the adversary; but it is right for the body to be in subjection and tribulation, for it very speedily becomes unduly exalted by the persuasion and flattery of the evil. And it is therefore right that the soul should be more prepared and more exalted than the body, that the body may not prevail over it, and bring it low by the its lusts. Our Lord also gave this indication to the blessed Apostles, and commanded them, saying, "Do not worry as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, for such things do the peoples of the earth seek after, and your Father knows the things you have need of; but seek the kingdom of God and His glory, and the things which are superior to these shall be added to you."

THE PERSECUTION OF MAXIMINUS

Shortly time after these things a storm and a persecution arose in the Church, during the years of the reign of Maximinus, the wicked Emperor. And the soldiers began to seize and to take into Alexandria a great company of the blessed confessors; and the report of these things reached the blessed Anthony. Straightaway he left his habitation and he made haste at the sound of the strife, and he said to himself, "I will go and draw near to there, so that if Divine Grace calls me, it shall find me prepared, and if it thinks otherwise concerning my unworthy self, I shall at all events be a spectator of the strife." He desired exceedingly to enter the race, and to be accounted worthy of the athlete's crown. So he travelled on his way and drew near and arrived at the city, and he went in through the gate, and inquired where the holy athletes had been made to assemble, and where they had been gathered together, and asked concerning the report of the strife.

As soon as he saw those who had been called by Divine Grace to death at this time, he planned with all diligence and by every means in his power to be a companion to every one of them in the contest in which they were to stand.

He prepared and made himself ready to be with every man, and he became a prisoner in the prison with those who were shut up in these, and he ministered to them and relieved their wants. He passed his time continually in close companionship with the rest of the prisoners who were to be exiled, and those who were to be sent out from the country to the mines, and to the islands, and he ministered to them with great pains and care. He was found to be ready to accompany all such as were brought and were going in to their doom, both in their going in and coming out; as they went in he gave them encouragement and admonition, and as they came out he ascribed blessings to them and sang hymns of praise. And it was his custom to do this day by day, and his acts were so well known and so famous in all the city that at length the report came to the ears of the governor. When the wicked governor learned concerning him, and the people had informed him concerning Anthony's disposition and work, he marveled at the bravery of his mind, and because he was neither moved by the tortures and tribulations which were falling upon his companions, nor was afraid. He commanded that he should no longer be found in the city, and that the other monks who were with him should not come either, because they also were doing the same work.

On another day certain athletes were summoned to the contest, and when the blessed Anthony knew of the command and threat of the judge, he washed and made white the apparel with which he was clothed (now his tunic was without shoulder coverings and was like the tunics with which the Egyptians cover themselves), and having arrayed himself in his clothing, he went and stood up inside the hall of judgement, opposite to the wicked judge. When the men who had heard the commands of the king concerning Anthony and his companions lifted up their eyes and saw him, they prevented him that day from appearing before the judge, for they marveled at him and at his boldness concerning himself, and his courage in the face of death. All this threatening was very sad to him, and in spite of his contempt for the Enemy, the door which would enable him to testify was not opened; but God preserved him for the strengthening of those who testified, and for the benefit of those who were about to do so, and for the increase of the monasteries of the monks, and for the praise of the whole Church. He continued to do this work until God was pleased to put an end to this persecution of the Church (now in those days the blessed Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, was martyred). After these things the blessed Anthony departed to his monastery and habitation, and he bore testimony continually, and, as it is written, he died daily, and after the persecution he was always adding a little more to the toil of his daily life.

ANTHONY DEPARTS TO THE INNER DESERT

He wore his apparel with the hair inside, and the skin outside, and to the day of his death he never touched his body with water, for he wished to keep it meagre, and he never dipped his feet in water without the sternest necessity. No man ever saw him naked or exposed, except when he died, and his body was carried in honour by his disciples. He once decided that for a short time he would remain in silent contemplation and that he would neither go outside his dwelling nor be seen by any man.

It came to pass that during the days in which he was thus occupied a certain Roman nobleman whose name was Martinianus came to visit him. Martinianus drew near and sought Anthony to pray with him, so that he would lay his hand upon his daughter, who was torn by a devil. When the nobleman had waited a very long time, and had begged the blessed man incessantly to open his door (though he would not be persuaded to do so) Anthony looked out of the window and saw him, and said to him, "O man, why do you weary me? I am a man like to yourself, but if you do believe in the Christ Whom I serve, depart in peace, and according as you believe pray, and it shall be to you even as you wish." Then straightaway that man had full and complete confidence in the word which he had heard, and went by the way he had come, taking his daughter with him, and she was delivered from the power of the subjugation of the evil.

God, who said, "Ask you and receive," performed very many things like to this by the hands of Anthony. Many people who were afflicted with diseases of several kinds thronged to him, and came and sat down by the side of his cell, and each of them obtained relief from his afflictions.

When he saw that many people were gathered together before him, and that the trouble which men and women caused him increased, he became afraid either lest he should be unduly exalted in his mind by reason of the things which God had done by his hand, or lest others should esteem him beyond what was right and more than he deserved. He thus determined to go away from that place and to enter the Thebaid. Then he took a little bread and went and sat down by the side of the river, and waited until he should see a boat going to that district to which he was ready to go. As he was pondering these things in his mind, suddenly a voice from heaven was heard by him, and it called him and said to him, "Anthony, where are you going? Why are you departing from this place?" He was not afraid of the voice which came to him, but like a man who was accustomed to do so he spoke with it, and answered and said, "Because, O my Lord, the people will not permit me to enjoy a little silent contemplation; it is for this reason that I am wishing to go up to the

Thebaid, and especially do I desire it because the people are seeking at my hands that which is wholly beyond my powers."

Then again the voice came to him, saying, "If you go up it will not be to the Thebaid only, and even if you go into the Thebaid as you are thinking of doing, you will have to endure toil greater than that which you perform here. If, however, you wish to enjoy silent contemplation and to be at rest, get you gone into the innermost desert." Anthony the blessed answered and said, "O my Lord, who will show me the way to that difficult place? For neither I myself know it, nor am I acquainted with or have knowledge of men who do." Now whilst he was standing up, there passed by certain Arabs who had made ready and set out on their way to go to that region. The blessed man drew near to them, entreated them to let him go with them, and they received him gladly because it was manifest that it was the commandment of God which was to be performed in this matter. Having travelled with them for three days and three nights, he arrived at a certain high mountain, and he found in the lower parts some water which was clear, and cool, and sweet, and a few palm-trees, for the land which was by the side of the mountain was a flat plain. The place was pleasing to the blessed Anthony, and he loved it well, and he loved it especially because God had been his Governor and had led him to that spot. Therefore Anthony encamped there and dwelt in that place, and he was exalted there like a king in the courts of his palace. When those Arabs who had brought him to that place saw this, they wondered and marveled, and they left with him a little bread which was found with them. From that time forward whenever they were journeying into Egypt and returning from it, those Arabs, by reason of the wonderful things which they saw in the man, always passed by the place where he was, and also brought him bread. There were found in that region a few small birds which came from the palm trees.

It came to pass that after a time it was heard by the brethren where he was, and like beloved sons, they remembered their righteous father, and they made inquiries and found out where the place was, and they labored strenuously. They sent to him everything that could be of use to him. When the blessed Anthony saw that the brethren had begun to take trouble for him, he begged those who had begun to go to him to bring him a little wheat and a hoe. When they had brought them to him, he went about the land at the foot of the mountain, and found a little place which was suitable for cultivating and watering; thus he was able to provide himself with as much bread as he needed. He rejoiced greatly because he had found the means which would prevent him from troubling any man, and because he would be a burden to himself only. Having seen that the brethren were thronging to him, and that they would not be prevented from coming to him, he tilled a portion of that ground and made

it into a vegetable garden for the benefit of those who came to him. When he first began to sow wheat in that place, the wild animals used to come there in large numbers for the sake of the water, and they damaged the crop, but one day when they were among the corn according to their custom, he went quietly and seized one of them, and he said to them all with a laugh, "Why do you do harm to me, seeing that I do no harm to you? Get going, therefore, in the Name of the Lord, and never come again near to this place." From that hour this was a command from heaven to them, and they never again harmed that place.

THE INEFFECTUAL ATTACKS OF SATAN

The blessed Anthony was alone in that desert, for the place in which he had his habitation was waste and desolate; and his mind therefore dwelt the more upon exalted things, and was content. The brethren who used to go to visit him entreated him to allow them to bring him there month by month a few garden herbs and olives and oil. Although he contended with them about it, they overcame him with their entreaty, and compelled him to receive them, and they began to pay him visits, one at a time, according to their entreaty to him. The blessed man was exceedingly old, and he was far advanced in years. In that desert also he endured strife, not with flesh and blood, but with devils and with impure spirits, and we have learned this also from those who were going to visit him continually. They used to hear also there the sound of tumult and of outcry, and to see flashing spears, and at night time they would see the whole mountain filled with fiery phantoms, and those men were greatly terrified. However, the blessed Anthony was trained in stratagems of war like a man of war, and he was prepared, and he stood up and rebuked the evil, who straightway ceased according to his command; and he encouraged the brethren who were with him not to be terrified or to tremble at the sight of such visions as these. For, he said to them, "They are only empty phantoms which perish as if they had never existed at the Name of the Cross." And wonder and admiration laid hold upon every man at the greatness and at the manner of the righteousness which was found in the blessed man.

He was not terrified at the devils, he was not wearied by the desert, and his soul had no fear of the wild beasts which were there; but Satan suffered torture from all these things. One day he came to the blessed man who was singing the Psalms of David, and he gnashed his teeth upon him loudly; but the blessed Anthony ceased not to sing, and he was comforted and helped by the grace of our Lord. One night while he was standing up and was watching in prayer, Satan gathered together all the wild beasts of the desert, and brought

them against him. They were so many in number that he can hardly have left one beast in its den. As they compassed him about on every side, and with threatening looks were ready to leap upon him, he looked at them boldly and said to them, "If you have received power over me from the Lord, draw near, and do not delay, for I am ready for you. But if you have made ready and come at the command of Satan, get back to your places and do not tarry, for I am a servant of Jesus the Conqueror." When the blessed man had spoken these words, Satan was straightaway driven away by the mention of the Name of Christ like a sparrow before a hawk.

On another day, he was weaving palm leaves (for such was his occupation), and he used to toil at it so that he might not be a burden upon any man, and that he might make baskets to give as gifts to the people who were continually coming to visit him. Suddenly he put up his hand over the door, and took hold of a rope of palm leaves to bring outside, and he leaped and stood up to look out. As he looked out from the door, he saw an animal which had the following form: from its head to its side it was like a man, and its legs and feet were those of an ass. When the blessed Anthony saw it he only made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, "How can anyone imagine that the devil is crafty? How can anyone be agitated by him more than once or twice? Is it not within the scope of his cunning to know that these things are accounted by me merely empty phantasms? If there be anything whatever in the power of him that sent you, come here and perform what you were sent to do. But if Christ, who shall make an end of you, and in whom I have my hope, lives, and if He be true, let the destruction of yourself and of him that sent you take place immediately." Immediately, at the word Christ, there fell upon the creature quaking and trembling, and he took to flight, and as he was going forth in haste and was running along terrified, he fell down and burst asunder at no great distance from Anthony's abode. The devils did all these things in order that they might drive the blessed man from the desert.

VISITATION TO THE BRETHREN

It came to pass after a time that the brethren who were monks appeared before him and begged him to come down and visit them in their monastery for a long period, and having multiplied their entreaties he granted their request. He rose up and travelled with them in the desert to the borders of Egypt. There was with them a camel, which was laden with bread and water and provisions for the way, for no water whatsoever was to be found in the whole of that desert. Having travelled for one or two days, the water was finished and came to an end, for the men with him were not a few, and in those days the heat was

very fierce, and the people were overcome by thirst. And they were troubled even more because they had wandered about the whole of that district that they might find water, and they threw themselves down on the ground, being in trouble and in great danger. Because they were in despair about themselves they turned the camel adrift to wander about in the desert. When the blessed old man saw the people in such great distress, he sighed heavily, and having departed from them a short distance, he bowed his knees upon the ground and spreading out his hands towards heaven, he cried out to God, and said, "Consider, O Lord, at this time also the prayer of your servant." Before the words of his prayer were ended, water sprang up from that place where he had prayed, and he brought all the people to come there, and they prayed and gave thanks to God. They drank and were relieved from their tribulations, and they also filled their water-skins with the water. Then they went forth in quest of the camel, and they brought him back to their camp. They found him quite near, because it happened that, through the Providence of God, while the animal was wandering about until his cord was caught by a root and he was unable to move, and he stood still until they went and brought him back. They gave the camel water to drink, and they loaded up his load upon him, and they set out on their road.

When they had come to a district which was inhabited and had entered the villages, many people rushed forth from the whole of that neighbourhood and came to the place where the blessed man was, for every man was waiting and longing for him, and the love of him was hot in their minds, and they drew near and offered their respect to him as to a righteous father. The blessed man spread abroad the things which he had provided and was carrying with him when he came from the desert, and he made them happy with the enjoyments of the Spirit. At that time there was twofold joy in the monasteries of the monks, and they rejoiced in the triumphs of the blessed old man whom they saw renewing his youth like the eagle. The chief of all the commandments which he used to give to all the monks was that they should freely confess, before everything, the true faith of Christ, and should love it with all their strength; that they should preserve themselves from evil thoughts, and from the lusts of the body; that they should flee from vain boasting; that they should pray continually, and should be prepared and ready to sing Psalms and to recite the Office before they went to sleep; that after sleep they should read and remember the words of the Scriptures, in which was their life; that they should meditate upon the acts and lives of the Apostles, and should consider what they were before they approached Christ. And also what they were after they had drawn near to Him, and how in their former state they were despised and held in contempt by the world, and how in the latter state they suddenly waxed great, and were

held in high honour, both in this world and in the kingdom of God. And that it was not their own strength which had made for them this exalted estate and honour, but their perfect righteousness towards God. With these and such like admonitions did he make zealous and strengthen their minds.

Moreover, he spoke the following words: Since we, who are monks, are not held fast by anger in anything whatever, Satan takes us away through this very thing that we may rage one against the other. It is therefore necessary that we should at all times remember the word of our Lord which says, "If you bring to the altar your offering, and there remember that you are held by anger against your brother, go and be reconciled with your brother, and then offer up your offering." We should remember also the word of the Apostle, "Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath." This command, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," was not written merely to tell us that we were never to be angry, but to warn us against offences of every kind, and against keeping wrath one against the other. For it is very right and seemly that the sun should not go down by day and leave us in sin, and that the moon should not overtake us in the same by night, and should not find us in the service of the Wicked One, or thinking of him. Since therefore it is well for us to be thus, it is right that we should consider and examine the word of the Apostle which admonished us, saying, "Try one another, examine one another." Let us then each and every day meditate in such a way that every man among us may receive from his soul the computation of all his works and thoughts, both by day and by night; and let every man be an honest investigator of his own thoughts for himself, before the righteous Avenger comes Who shall reward righteously, and shall punish even according as the Holy Gospel has admonished us; for the wages of the mind are always the same. Those who have fought against sins He will encourage, and him that stands in the truth He will admonish and urge to new exertions, lest he be stolen away by boasting, and be despoiled by means of overconfidence, and lest he despise one man and love another, and justify his own soul. Let us then do these things, even as the Apostle Paul said, "until our Lord comes," who shall judge the things which are hidden.

For it may happen that we ourselves do not know our own manner of life and works, but though we have lost this knowledge it is manifest before God, who knows the things which are hidden. Let us therefore appoint Him to be the Judge. Let us, at all times, take the burden of the other and let us suffer for each other even as our Lord suffered for us.

But let us examine our souls unceasingly, and let us provide and fill our houses in this world with whatever things we lack with the greatest care. And let this thing also be an admonition to us against sin, and let each man write down both his actions and his thoughts upon the tablets of his heart, as if he

were obliged to read and lay them out in due order under the eye of every man. For when he ponders and considers he will find that it would be a shame and a disgrace that these things should come to light. And when he meditates further he will see that, inasmuch as the mere hearing of these things would cause him great disgrace, it is manifest that the doing of them would work great destruction. And since it is difficult for sin to come to the light, it is certain that falsehood clings to sin. For when the natural eye sees what is happening no act of shame is to be expected, so also if we were men who were obliged to tell each other our manner of life and thoughts, no sin would ever be committed by us because of the shame which would result. Let then the writings in which our shortcomings are inscribed be things which are shameful, for they take the place of the eyes of the spectators. And since we are ashamed of the writings as if they had been spectators, let us, like men of understanding, cease from the doing of and from meditating upon these disgraceful works. Now therefore by such means as these, if our souls are a care to us, let us bring our bodies into subjection, so that by our works we shall please God, and treat with contempt the Enemy by means of our strenuousness.

Now it was with such matters as these that the blessed man Anthony used to rejoice the monks who went to visit him. And the others, that is to say, those who were smitten with sickness and those who were evilly entreated by evil spirits, he would comfort by his words, and would aid by his prayers. And our Lord at all times made him to be happy in his prayers. For when they were heard, he was not unduly lifted up in his heart, and when they were not heard, he murmured not, but in all of them he gave thanks to God. And, moreover, he encouraged those who were smitten with sickness not to be disheartened by reason of their tribulations, and he told them that they must know that neither he nor any other man had power to grant relief of them, and that it was God alone who could do so, and that He would do so for whomever He pleased whenever He pleased. These and such like words became a relief and an aid for those who were smitten with sicknesses, and he gladly lightened the weight of their trials by more than the words which were offered to them. But those who were made whole were told before everything else that they must not return their thanks and gratitude to the blessed Anthony, but that they must ascribe praise wholly to God for their healings.

THE WONDROUS WORKS OF ANTHONY

Once, a certain nobleman went to the blessed Anthony in the inner desert. This man, named Parniton, was an officer in the palace. He had an evil spirit, was always gnawing his tongue, and nearly lost the light of his eyes.

This man went to the blessed Anthony, entreated him to pray over him. And having done so Anthony said to that man, "Depart, and you shall be healed." Parniton entreated him that he might remain with him for some days. The blessed Anthony was saying to him continually, "You cannot be healed here. Go away from this place, and when you arrive in Egypt you will see suddenly the wonderful sign, which God has given to you." Having confidence in these words the man went away. Before he saw Egypt, deliverance came to him, and he became healed, according to the word of the blessed man, which was revealed to him in the Spirit by our Redeemer.

There was a certain virgin of Busiris who suffered from a severe and terrible disease, for the water which flowed from the pupil of her eyes, and the matter which fell from her nostrils, before it fell upon the ground became worms, and her whole body was in a state of decay. Because of the progress of the disease her eyes had lost the power of natural sight. When the family of this young woman heard that certain brethren monks were preparing to go to the blessed Anthony, because they believed wholly in the man who had healed a woman of a flow of blood which had lasted twelve years, they entreated them to allow them to go with them also and to follow in their company. As the brethren received their petition and permitted them to go in their company, they arrived in due course at the place where the blessed man was.

The family of the maiden remained with their daughter a short distance on this side of the mountain, at the place in which dwelt the man of God, Paphnutius the Confessor and Anchorite. When the brethren had gone in and had greeted the blessed Anthony, whilst they were meditating about relating to him concerning the maiden and her family, he began to speak before they could ask about her sickness and afflictions, and said how it happened that she came to be in their company. Then making the conversation of the blessed man the pretext for their words they entreated him to allow the maiden to come into his presence. He would not be persuaded to do so, and said to them, "Get back to the place where the maiden is. If she is not already dead, you will find that she has been wholly healed. This has not happened either through me or through the gift which my poor and contemptible person possesses. It is a gift from our Redeemer, Who performs grace and mercy in every place for those who cry to Him in affliction. Get away then quickly, for the merciful God has hearkened to the prayer of the maiden, and has regarded the toil and labor of her family. Behold, His loving kindness has made known and revealed to me in this hour that relief from her affliction has come to the maiden." Thus this wonderful thing has taken place. The brethren went away and found the kinsfolk of the maiden rejoicing, for their daughter was completely healed from her affliction.

At the same time, two brethren went out from Egypt to visit the blessed Anthony. When they were near to arrive at his place, it happened that the water failed, and they were so completely brought low for want of it. By reason of their great tribulation, one of them departed from this world, and his companion was well near departing likewise. The blessed man Anthony called suddenly to two of those brethren who happened to be with him, saying, "Take some water in a vessel and get down quickly on the road to Egypt, for two brethren set out together to come to us, but when they had left behind them the greater part of the mountain road, they lacked water; one of them has already fainted and died. The other is near to death, and will die if you do not speedily reach him. For thus has it appeared to me when I was praying." The brethren having made haste arrived at the place and found a dead man according to what had been said to them. They took up the dead body and carried it away. They fed the other, in whom the spirit was still found, with bread and water. They took him with care to the old man. The blessed man was distant from them a journey of two days.

If any man asks why the vision that appeared to the blessed Anthony did not occur before the other man died, he will ask that which is unseemly, for it belongs not to him to know what God was meditating concerning every man; this thing belongs to God only who, whenever He pleases, makes a revelation to him that fears Him.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE GREAT AMMON

The blessed Anthony possessed this wonderful attribute. When he was dwelling in the mountain, his mind was alert and watchful to observe and to see, by the operation of the Holy Spirit which dwelt in him, that which was a far off as if it were near. For, once, when he was in the mountain, he lifted up his eyes and suddenly saw a man being taken up to heaven. He wondered greatly, magnified God, and ascribed blessings to Him who had been accounted worthy of this honour. Saint Anthony begged the Lord that he might know who the man was who had attained to such exalted greatness. Suddenly a voice from heaven was heard, saying, "This is the soul of the blessed man Ammon who used to dwell in the country of Nitria." Ammon was a mighty man and a valiant fighter in the ascetic life. He had been a monk from his early manhood to his old age. The end of his life was greater than its beginning. The distance of the country of Nitria from the mountain where dwelt the blessed man Anthony was a journey of thirteen days. When those who were found with the old man Anthony saw him marveling in this manner concerning the blessed Ammon, they entreated him that they might learn when his departure from the world took place. He

informed them that it had happened when the revelation appeared to him.

There was also another famous man with whom many were acquainted, who used to visit the blessed Anthony frequently. Many glorious deeds, signs, and wonders were done at his hands. Once, for one reason or another, it was necessary for the blessed Ammon to cross the river, the name of which was Dabha (i.e. the Wolf River). He had with him the righteous man, Theodore. This blessed man also was mighty in the ascetic life. When they had come near to the river, and were standing on the bank, they agreed that each should go away a short distance from the other so that they might not see each other's nakedness while crossing the river. When the righteous man Theodore removed himself from him, the blessed man Ammon began to have shame even of himself, and whilst he was in this state of mind suddenly Divine Grace seized him, and set him up upon the other side of the river. When the righteous man Theodore had crossed the river, he drew near to the blessed Ammon, examined him attentively, found that his feet had not been dipped in the water, and that not a drop of water had touched either his body or his garments. Then Theodore began to entreat Ammon to inform him how his passage over the river had been affected. When he saw that he was making many excuses about it and was debating the matter, he became certain in his mind that it was Divine Grace, which had taken him across the river. He persisted strongly in questioning Ammon, took hold of his feet, and said to him, "Yes, or no? I will not leave you until you have shown me this thing." When the old man Ammon saw the persistence of the righteous Theodore, and remembered especially the word which had gone forth to him, he entreated him not to make the matter known to any man until his departure from this world. Then he revealed to him that that he had been carried across the river by the Spirit, and that he had never walked upon the water at all. This thing our Lord Himself did by His own power. He made the great Apostle Peter to do so, and it was done by Ammon also by the command of our Lord. This matter was made known by the righteous Theodore after the death of the old man Ammon, according to their agreement.

The brethren, who had heard from the blessed Anthony the story of the departure of the old man Ammon from the world, bore in mind the day and the hour on which it took place. Three days later, when certain brethren came from the country of Nitria, they inquired of them concerning the death of the blessed Ammon. They learned that the days of the old man had come to an end at the very moment and hour when the blessed Anthony had spoken to them, and when he himself saw Ammon being taken up to heaven. The brethren did indeed marvel among themselves concerning the purity of the soul of the blessed Anthony, and how he had seen clearly and openly that which had

taken place at a distance of a thirteen-days journey, i.e. the ascension of the soul of the blessed Ammon into heaven.

Moreover, a certain Count called Archelaus came to him, and he found him in the outer mountain praying. He begged him on behalf of the nun Polycratia, from the city of Laodicea, who was faithful and devoted to the ascetic life. She was afflicted by pains in her stomach and her right side. In short, her whole body was in suffering. When the blessed man had prayed for her, Archelaus wrote down the day and the hour in which the prayer had been made, and after this the blessed man dismissed him. Archelaus returned to his own country. When Archelaus had gone to the province of Laodicea he found Polycratia the nun in perfect health. Archelaus asked her at what time she had found deliverance from her sufferings, and how had it been brought about. They related to him that the mercy of God had been poured out upon her at a certain time suddenly and that she had felt relief and found herself made whole and free from the violent pains of her disease. Immediately as the words of their narrative concerning her illness had come to an end, Archelaus brought forth the paper on which was written the day and hour that the prayer had been made on behalf of Polycratia. The words of their narrative agreed with those which were written on his paper as if they had been written down at the same time with a pen. Then wonder laid hold upon every man, and they all admitted openly that the time at which the prayer was made by the blessed man was precisely that at which relief had come to her.

Numerous similar things had been performed by his hands. When the brethren used to set out to come from Egypt to him, he knew it beforehand and was able to declare it to those who happened to be with him. It was revealed to him sometimes even months and days beforehand that they were coming to him, and the reason for their journey. For some used to come to him merely to see him, and others came that they might be with him for a few days, and others came to him because of their diseases and afflictions of various kinds; and no man found that long road exhausting or fell into despair, because the relief which each man obtained from the blessed Anthony was greater than the toil which he had endured. When a man saw these triumphs, and felt anxious to narrate them, the blessed Anthony used to entreat him not to marvel at these deeds, but to wonder at the Divine Grace of God, which considered unworthy and feeble men worthy of such great care.

Once the brethren entreated him to visit their monasteries. When they had come to a certain place they asked him to embark on a boat and to cross over the river. When he had gone to the boat a foul smell struck him suddenly. When the brethren heard of this, they answered him saying, "Master, this smell arises from the fish and the salted meat with which the boat is loaded."

He would not be persuaded that it was so, and said, "This smell does not arise from these things." Whilst he was ending his words, a young man, in whom was an evil spirit, was found in the boat. As soon as he saw the blessed man, he shrank away from him straightaway. When the devil abused him, he cried out and uttered threats against the blessed man from among the people. The blessed Anthony turned himself round, rebuked and silenced him. Immediately the young man felt the deliverance from him. Every man was persuaded that the smell was that of the devil, for their wonder.

There came to him a certain well-known man who was very sorely tried by an unclean spirit. He was so distressed through him that his mind was carried away, and he was unable to understand any question, which was asked to him. His whole body there was covered with lacerated spots through his bites. Those who had brought him took him to the blessed man Anthony and begged him to pray for him. The old man Anthony looked at him, and his mercy having revealed itself, he took him by the hand, and made him stand up. He knelt down on his knees before him, and watched with him the whole night. At the time of dawn the young man approached the blessed Anthony from behind his back, and struck him. Those who had brought him began to rebuke him. The blessed man said to them, "Do not be angry with him. This act is not of him, but of the Evil One who is in him. The evil has been commanded to depart from what God has created, and to return to his place. Consequently, the evil incensed with him, and has done this thing. Glorify God then, because of this thing which has taken place, for it has given to you a sign whereby you may be sure that God has won deliverance for him." When the blessed Anthony said these things, the young man was made whole, came to himself, remembered where he was, and through whom deliverance had come to him. He began to salute the blessed man, and to confess God with many loud protestations. The believing men have related many wonderful things like this, but in comparison to the other deeds, which were done by the blessed man, these are not very important.

SAINT ANTHONY'S VISION

Once, Saint Anthony stood up to pray at the ninth hour. He perceived that his mind was exalted, and, what was still more wonderful, that whilst he was on the earth his mind was transformed, and he did not feel that he was upon the earth. For he saw that his soul was not being lifted up by the power of his mind, but by the angels. When he himself was raised up, he saw other beings, which came and stood opposite to him, and they prevented him from passing on. They said, "Let us see of what kind are his deeds, and if we cannot by any

means make him to be taken by us.” Those who were guiding him turned round, rebuked them, and said to them, “Our Lord by His grace blotted out his shortcomings and his sins before he became a disciple, but you are embodied in his triumphs and in his works and deeds which took place after he had become a disciple; and thereupon his soul was immediately exalted to the place to which it attained.” After this his mind took up its abode within him. He felt and perceived what had happened to him. He magnified and gave thanks to God by reason of everything, which had taken place. He remained in prayer the whole night and tasted no food of any kind.

A man must also marvel at the severity of our contest, at the great labor by which he passes to this air; and must say, “This is the word of the Apostle, who spoke, saying, ‘Your contending is against the ruler who holds the power of this world.’” For this reason the Apostle himself commanded, saying, “Put on the armour of God in order that you may be able to stand against him in the evil day,” so that the enemy may have no occasion in any way to say about us that we have been sorely put to shame. My beloved, in connection with the history of the blessed man, let us remember the matter of the Apostle who said, “Whether in the body or out of the body, I know not; God knows.” The blessed Paul was snatched up into the third heaven, and heard words which may not be uttered, and came down again; but the blessed Anthony was lifted up into the place to which he was lifted up, and he received a pledge of the confidence of his labor, and he returned and took up his abode with himself. The sign of grace was also found with him. Whenever he had in his mind any matter the truth of which he could not comprehend with his thoughts, he would make supplication in his prayer, and it would be revealed to him, and in all these things he was taught by God even as it is written.

After these things he had a dispute with certain men who came to him about the ordering and disposition of the soul, and the place to which it went after its departure from the body. On another day, he heard a voice from heaven, which said, “Anthony, get out and you shall see.” Moreover, this thing had also been given to him: he was able to distinguish between heavenly voices and the voices of enemies. He lifted up his eyes and saw the form of a man which was immeasurably abominable; his head reached up into the heavens, and round about him on all sides were numbers of beings, some of which were flying about with their wings, and were soaring up above him; and he put forth his hands that he might lay hold of some of them, but he was not able to do so. Those winged beings who were flying about were those who had preserved their faith and their works; but the others he could lay hold of because they were those who had not received the faith, and who were remote from works. Then the blessed Anthony saw that the man was gnashing his

teeth with bitterness at those who were being lifted up into life, for that son of perdition would have been content that every man should perish with him. And straightaway a voice came to the blessed Anthony, and said, "Know what has been made," then he understood that this was the passage of souls, and that he who was standing in the midst was Satan, the enemy of righteousness. Such was the vision, which came to him, and it roused him up and incited him exceedingly to triumph in his old age.

These things were not related by his will, but the brethren who saw him when he was sighing during his prayer to God perceived that something had been seen by him, and they clung to him and pressed him with entreaties to inform them what had happened. Having examined his mind, and seen that it was free from boasting, he decided within himself that the report of such things as these would certainly admonish the youthful monks to stand up like mighty warriors in the war which the Enemy makes against us, and not to be caught by him in any way, so that he might not be able to lift up his heel against us; and having thus decided he revealed and made known to them the whole matter even as it appeared to them.

For he was exceedingly long-suffering in respect of the things, which were fitting, and he was thoroughly meek in spirit, and in all these things he preserved scrupulously the Canons of the Church, and made answer to every man according to his grade and rank. To Bishops and Elders he paid honour like a man who was in duty bound so to do, and he was not ashamed to bow his head before them at the time of the blessing; but deacons he received with joy and with affection, and although like a father he made them to hear words of righteousness and admonition, during the time of prayer he would set them in front by reason of the authority which had once been given to them by God. He meditated continually upon righteousness, and he did not seek only to make another hear the Word, but he himself rejoiced to hear it. He was never ashamed to do so, even though he was an old man and a famous one; for on several occasions he asked questions of those who were with him at all times, and entreated that he might hear that which was suitable to his life and deeds, and he would confess that he had been benefited whenever a subject of this kind was debated among them.

The countenance of the blessed man was clothed with the splendour of praise, and wonder laid hold upon every man. Whenever it happened that he was with many people, and it happened that a man came there who had never seen the blessed Anthony, his eyes would glance quickly over all the people, and he would gaze intently upon them all, and would at once distinguish the newcomer, who, by reason of the splendour of grace which dwelt in the blessed man, would, as if drawn by cords, leave the other people and boldly make his

way direct to him. This did not arise because the stature of the blessed Anthony was greater than that of any other man, or because his external appearance was more beautiful than that of any other man, but by reason of those spiritual triumphs which were within him, even as it is written, "A happy heart makes beautiful the body; and an evil heart makes gloomy the countenance." Moreover, Jacob discerned by the appearance of the countenance of Laban that he was meditating fraud concerning him, for he said to his wives, "I see that the face of your father is not towards me as it was yesterday and formerly." In the same manner Samuel recognized David, for his eyes were beautiful, and his features were joyous. Thus it also was in the case of the blessed Anthony, and by such indications he was known by those who saw him; when he was troubled they saw that his visage was disturbed, and when he was angry that his thoughts were ruffled.

ST ANTHONY AND THE HERETICS

Moreover, he was immeasurably firm in the faith, and he held fast to honour and discernment. He did not conduct himself in the matter of faith like a man who made himself a stranger to the children of men, or like one who dwelt in the desert, either in common with other monks, or by himself. He would not receive the people who used to go to him without question and enquiry. For he never joined himself to the Meletian heretics who were in Egypt, as from the very beginning he was well acquainted with their heresies, and their restlessness. He never took count at all of the other heresies, and even exhorted every man to withdraw himself from them. He used to say, "Neither in the discussion of them nor in their result is there any advantage."

Similarly the Arian heretics were so detestable and contemptible in his sight that he withdrew himself altogether from having any dealings with them, and he also exhorted other people to keep themselves far from their words and their doctrines. It happened once that some of these Arians went to him, but when he had enquired at their hands, and had asked them questions and learned that they belonged to the dough of the leaven of Arius, the unbeliever, he drove them away from his presence like the other wild beasts and vipers. He said to them, "You are more bitter and more evil than the beasts of prey and deadly serpents." On another occasion, the Arians spread a report and made a scandal, which they cast upon the world. They went about, saying, "Anthony has agreed to our faith and has accepted it." When this report came to his ears, astonishment laid hold upon him, and marveled greatly at the falsehood of the Arians, and how easily error came to them through the impudence of their minds.

When the bishops and the other brethren saw that the wickedness of the Arians was prevailing, and that they had spread this report through the whole city, they entreated the blessed man to exert himself a little in order that those liars might be put to great shame. He was persuaded by them to go down to the city of Alexandria, and to proclaim openly that the Arians were blasphemers, so that their iniquity might come back upon their own heads. Having gone down to Alexandria a vast multitude of people thronged there at the report of the coming of the blessed man, and when all the people were gathered together to him he admonished and exhorted them in a loud voice to beware of the error of the Arians, and he said, "This Arianism is the essence of all heresies. It is the work of the christs of falsehood. Get away from them that you may not be corrupted by them. God forbid that the Son of God should be proclaimed to be a thing, which has been made, or that He should be named as something, which came from nothing. For He is of the substance of the Father, and He is His Child, and it is therefore great wickedness for a man to say that there was ever a time when He was not; for the Word existed at all times with God. Therefore flee from association with them, lest you have a portion in their blasphemy, for light has no connection with darkness. You must have no connection whatever with them. You must have no likeness to or association with them, for you are in the righteousness of your faith believing Christians, and those who say that the Son of the Living God is a created thing are in no wise different from the heathen. Believe me, O my beloved, the very creatures are far more to be desired than those who worship the creatures in preference to their Creator, and who confound and compare the creatures with the Lord and Creator of the universe."

Upon this all the people held the Arians to be like other heretics, and they were esteemed in their sight wholly as blasphemers and unbelievers, and all men were confirmed in the correct view concerning the faith. Then the people of the city, both the Christians and the Army (i.e. the heathen of Alexandria), and also those who were called priests, ran into the church to see the man of God, for by this name and title was he called. In that city also our Lord wrought by the hand of the blessed man many signs and wonders, and so many of those whose minds had been injured through error obtained through him the means of healing. More people became Christians on that day than in the whole year previously. Large numbers of the heathen entreated to be allowed to see the blessed man, and to draw near to the cloak of the righteous man; to this wonderful pass did the measure of the power of the blessed man come. When the brethren saw that a great uproar had arisen, and that the people were troubling him by thronging about him, they made a way through them and surrounded him, for they thought that he would be choked by the

throng. However, the blessed man answered and said to them quietly, and with a smile, "Let the people perform their desire. For what do you think? Is it not as easy for me to bear with this crowd of believers as with the throng of devils, which are in the desert?"

When he had made an end of all these things in Alexandria, he went forth to depart into the wilderness, and the whole city clung to him. When he had come to the side of the gate of the city, a certain woman came running with all her strength after the crowd, and cried out, "Wait a little for me, O man of God. My daughter is grievously vexed by a devil and tormented, and I beseech you to wait, and allow healing to come to my daughter. Do not let my soul be carried out of my body through my much running." When the voice was heard by the ears of the old man, he paused and stood still until the woman drew near to him and cast her daughter down by his feet. The blessed man looked up to heaven and cried out the Name of Christ over the devil. Straightway the damsel stood up, and turned towards her mother, being freed from the subjection of the evil. Every man gave thanks to God, and the mother of the damsel also glorified him that had wrought deliverance for her. Immediately after the blessed man had performed this work he turned to his journey, for he rejoiced exceedingly at his going to the desert. He was even like to the man who rejoices at going again, after a long absence, to his own house, and the house of his kinsfolk. The blessed Anthony was a wise man, and was one who was full of understanding. It was a great wonder in the sight of men how such knowledge and understanding could dwell in a man who had not learned to read or to write.

THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

Once, two philosophers came to where Saint Anthony was to try him, (now he was living on the outer mountain). As soon as he perceived them to be afar off he knew and discerned what they were by their garb. Having gone out to meet them, he said to them through his interpreters, "Why have you given yourselves all this trouble to come and see a man of low estate?" They answered him in these words, "You are not a man of low estate, but a wise man." After he had understood their words, he began to say to them, "If you had come to a man of low estate, you would have given yourselves all this trouble in vain, but if your words are true, and if you believe indeed that I am a wise man, be even as I am, for it is necessary that we should at all times be zealous to obtain the things which are fair. Had it happened that I had come to you, I should have been impelled to become like to you. Now that you have come to me, be Christians like myself." When these philosophers heard these words, and

saw in what a state of subjection the devils stood before him, they marveled exceedingly and turned away in silence.

There also came to him others who were like to those in the outer mountain. They came prepared to make a mock of him as if he had been a fool, for they had heard that he possessed no learning. When they had pressed their talk upon him after this manner, the old man said to them, "I will ask you a question, and you shall return me an answer. Which is the older, learning or the mind? And which is the source of the other? Is learning the source of the mind, or the mind of learning?" The philosophers said to him, "The mind is the prince of learning, for it has discovered learning." He said to them, "Does not then the man whose mind is enlightened and bright surpass greatly him that has only learning? For by the first word which he utters do men test a man, and they understand whether he possesses a wise and understanding mind or not." They also marveled at what they had seen and heard, and they likewise went back to their own country.

For he was a man whose intelligence was profound, wise and exceedingly understanding. He was not in any way like a man who had been brought up in the desert from his youth. When he became old and waxed aged he was simple in his speech, austere and stern in his mind, but still he was perfect and complete in everything. Every good quality was found in him, and was most fitting. His speech, even as we have already said, was so exceedingly savoury and so well seasoned with heavenly salt, that none of his hearers could be angry at his words, and no man could be envious of the acts of his daily life, for he was ready and prepared to hear and answer every kind of opinion.

Once it happened that certain men, who were wise according to the world and who were received gladly among the Greeks, went to him, and began to ask him questions concerning the faith which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, wishing to confound him in a discussion concerning the matter of the Cross and of the preaching of our Lord. Having seen that they were ready to scoff and to mock, he bore with them a little. Having observed them, he roared greatly in his heart concerning the error which dwelt in them.

Then he spoke to them by means of an interpreter, who was exceedingly skilled in translating words from the Egyptian into the Greek language, and he said to them, "First of all, which is the easier? For a man to confess the Cross, or to believe that adultery, and fornication, and impure acts with men are committed by those who are called gods. For the doctrine which is spoken and believed by us is a mark and a likeness of the men by whom death is held in contempt, and the world is considered to be of no account, but the religion, which you preach is a service of impurity, and the desire of foul lusts. Which thing then is more beneficial for us to believe? That Christ is the Son of God,

and that His Godhead was in no way changed, although through His care for the redemption of the children of men He took upon Himself the body of our human nature. And with His Godhead was mingled His humanity, so that by means of His union with our human nature He might mingle it with His Godhead. Or that we should liken God to beasts and cattle, and that in consequence man should make himself like to the similitudes of beasts and of the creeping things of the earth and should worship them? Our belief proclaimed! That the coming of Christ took place for the redemption of the children of men, and that it should not be to us a cause for fornication, and falsehood, and injustice, and gluttony, and drunkenness, and lasciviousness, and the rest of the luxurious practices which exist in the world. We exhort and admonish men to avoid all these things, for a penalty has been decreed for every man who shall dare to transgress in respect of one of these things. Now you, through the fable of error, labor in the work of abomination, but we, because we have trust in the power and loving kindness of God, believe that the preaching of the Cross is easiest for us to follow. You, without any discernment, ascribe all kinds of hateful practices to your gods, so that you without any further thought may do everything you please.

Moreover, as concerning the soul you say that it is an image of the mind, and when you have meditated well upon this subject you go back and say that it will be dissolved; and therefore, because of this opinion which comes from your study, you lay it down that the mind itself will be divided and changed. For, of necessity, the image must in its form and similitude be exactly like that of which it is the copy; and you should know that when you think in this manner about the mind you also blaspheme the Father.

In respect of the Cross, which is it better for us to say? That it endures patiently the anger of the attack of the madness of our human nature, and that it neither departs by death, nor does the terrible death which strikes fear into the mighty man come to it, or shall we ascribe to it the error, and the allegories, and the cunning plans, and the vain stories, and the incitements to sin, and the flight, and the mockery, and the shame, which are written down in your fables, in which your gods took refuge, when strife and death came upon each one of them? For such things are the wisdom of your wisdom.

Why do you make a mockery of the Cross only and hold not in wonder the Resurrection? For those who have written the account of Christ's crucifixion have also proclaimed His Resurrection. And why, when you make mention of the Cross, do you not also recount the miracles, and the Resurrection from the dead, and all the other things also, that is to say the restoration of the sight of the blind, and the cleansing of the lepers, and the healing of the paralytics, and the walking upon the waters? For from these you would be able to have

understanding of Christ, and you would learn that he was not only a man but God also. Indeed, you appear to me to act wholly unjustly. For you do not judge matters rightly, and the Scriptures are not read in a proper manner by you; and since certain things are accepted and believed in by you, whilst others, which are akin to them, are not, where is your fair dealing in this matter?

Narrate to us your scriptures, and explain to us what is in them. What are the animals, which are worshipped, and what are the reptiles to which are given the names of gods, except subjects for mockery and contempt? But if a man void of understanding comes to you, you liken each one of them to gods in the speech of rational beings, and you expound the unlikely things, which are declared concerning them, so that the foolish may think that they are true. You give names to the earth, the heavens, the sun, the moon, the air, the sea, the fire, the waters, and to other created things. You call them gods, that you may lead man astray from the One God who is the Creator of the universe. The quest of the God of truth is not among you, and you are found worshipping the things, which have been created rather than Him who created them. For, if you gave the names of gods to such similitudes because created things were so exceedingly beautiful, it would have been sufficient for you to be able to admire them, without holding them in such absolute and singular honour in your minds. Because of this opinion of error which dwells in your mind, it is not difficult for you either to divert to the house which He has fashioned and adorned the honour which is due to the Master craftsman, or to hold lightly the King, and to ascribe the glory which is His due to His household which ministers to Him. What then have you to say against these words, O wise men? Speak, so that we may know if there is anything in the Cross which merits mockery."

And when the blessed man had spoken to them in this fashion the things which they could not endure to hear from him, they began to look to the right hand and to the left.

When the blessed man knew that they were silently seeking to make objections to his words, he spoke to them again through an interpreter, saying, "The work of these words is also their testimony; but because you yourselves take refuge in words of guile and falsehood, and because you employ them with the greatest skill, you desire that we, like yourselves, shall also journey on without the truth of investigation. Show me now briefly the work or proof of your words. First of all, how can the knowledge of God be truly comprehended? Which is the older; the faith, which is in works, or the quest of words?" They answered, saying, "The faith which is indeed faith; and this is the true knowledge."

The old man said to them, "You have well said, for faith is the sign of

the love which is made perfect in the soul. For discussion comes from words which are strung together, and therefore the faith which is in works, and which is closely united to them, is not sought after, because the quest of words is superfluous; for the matters which we comprehend by faith you try by every means to represent by comparisons and similitudes, and however much you weary yourselves you will never be able to narrate the things the truth of which we have comprehended. It is, therefore, well known and evident that our faith which is in works is far more excellent than your wisdom which consists of a discussion of words, and that your wisdom can not by any means be rightly compared to it.

For we Christians have not acquired the mystery of life through the wisdom of strange words, but by the power of faith which has been given to us by God, the Lord of all. And that these words are true, accept the proof from the following: Behold, we are not learned in books, yet we believe in God, and we possess understanding concerning His creation, and concerning the mercy of the Providence of His grace, and we have confidence through the faith of Jesus Christ that our faith is sure, whilst you have only words which are full of contentions. In your case the phantom of the adornment of your idols gradually comes to an end, but in ours our faith increases and becomes more abundant day by day everywhere. In your case, in spite of the abundance of your discussions and wisdom, you have no power to turn even one Christian to paganism, but in ours, by the faith of Christ which we preach, we despise your doctrine, and there is in your well-ordered, carefully arranged and polished words no power which can do away the teaching of Christ. Moreover, we by means of the Cross which you hold in contempt chase away and put to flight those devils, which you worship as gods, and wherever the name of the Cross is mentioned all the crafts and wiles of error come to an end. If it be divination it is destroyed, and if it be sorcery it is made an end of; and that such has been done in very truth you must admit when you are asked by us, Where is divination? Where are the magicians who were in Egypt? Where are the phantoms of the errors of the sorcerers? When were these things, which appertain to you destroyed except when the Cross of Christ was mentioned? Is then this Cross deserving to be despised? Judge this matter in your souls, consider it also and marvel at it. It is a matter of wonder that your doctrine has never before been a subject for persecution, and that it has only become so at this time when Christian kings live in honour and majesty in every place.

In proportion as persecution comes your doctrine hides itself, but ours, against which innumerable storms have arrayed themselves, becomes stronger and stronger. Your doctrine, notwithstanding that it is praised and magnified, becomes despised and rejected, whilst ours, although held in contempt, is great

in its acts and glorious in its operation, and being harassed spreads from one end of the earth even to the other without men taking care about it. For when did the knowledge of God come down into the world, and chastity flourish, and virginity shed its light abroad, and death become held in contempt, if the Cross of victory has not overcome and triumphed throughout all the earth? Of this fact no man can have any doubt, when he considers the blessed martyrs by whom death was despised because of the victory of the Cross. Behold, do we not see that the Church rejoices in innumerable congregations of virgins, both men and women, who preserve their bodies in all holiness? These are the true likenesses, which make known and show the faith of Christ, which is a living confidence and acknowledge in faith to those who put their trust in it. If you have been in doubt concerning these things up to this present, it is because your mind has been fettered with words of binding and loosing, the end of which you will never be able to find; for we do not, like you, go astray through the blandishment of the words of alien wisdom, but, according to what our Teacher spoke, we give a proof of our faith, and we readily manifest in the clearest possible manner the truth of our opinion to everyone who wishes to see it."

At that same time there were in that place certain men who were suffering from injuries to their bodies. The blessed man commanded them, so they came out and stood in the midst. Then he answered and said to those wise men, "Draw near now and, by whatever means you wish and will, whether by the wisdom of your renowned idols, or by your sorceries and enchantments, give the word, and let these afflicted souls have relief from their sufferings. But if you are not able to do so, stand aside and cease your hostile attacks upon us, and you shall straightway see the power of the Cross of Christ." Then he made the sign of the Cross over them three times, and the people were healed immediately and stood up; and when those philosophers saw this, they praised him greatly, and they marveled in very deed at the understanding of the man, and at the visible sign which had been done by his hand. The blessed man said to them, "Why do you marvel at this thing? It is not we who have done this, but Christ who does these things by the hands of those who fear Him. Therefore do you also believe even as do we, and become like us, and see that we possess none of the crafts of devils, but only the faith, which is made perfect by means of the love of Christ, our Lord Jesus. If you possess this also, you have no need of the quest of much discussion, for the deed itself will convince you that it is not by words, but by manifest works, that our doctrine increases and gives the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Such were the words which the blessed man spoke to those philosophers, who tarried to hear them, and who put to the test and then received the proof

of all the mental adornment of the old man; and thus having received his grace, they applauded his words and his acts, and having saluted him with great honour they returned to their own country.

ESTEEMED BY THE RULERS OF THIS WORLD

The fame of the blessed man reached even to the king, and the princes, and Emperor Constantine. When his sons Constantius and Constans heard concerning Anthony's works and triumphs, they began to write epistles to him as to a father and to entreat him to pray for them. They longed greatly to receive letters from him. He did not write letters quickly, and he did not consider too highly or boast about those, which he received. He continued to preserve the humility and sweetness of disposition which he possessed before he received the imperial epistles, and remained unchanged. Whenever he received a imperial letter, he would gather together the monks who happened to be with him, and say to them, "You marvel, perhaps, that the kings and the princes should write epistles to us, but what need is there for wonder, seeing that it is only one man writing letters to another? But what you should wonder at is how God wrote the Law for the children of men, and how He has spoken to us through His only Son." He preferred, however, not to receive epistles which were sent to him by the king and the princes, for he said, "It is not in my power to write epistles like theirs." Inasmuch as the king and the princes were Christians, he did not consider it seemly that their epistles should be held lightly, lest they might become offended and be displeased, and he permitted them to be read before every one who happened to be with him.

The manner in which he wrote his epistles in answer was as follows: In the first place he magnified those to whom they were addressed, and returned thanks because they were worshippers of Christ, and he gave them advice and prepared counsels which were suitable, and which would benefit them both in this world and in that which is to come. And he told them that the wearisome labors which were visible should not be accounted as overwhelming by them, and exhorted them to remember the judgement which is to come, and that it is Christ Who is the true and everlasting King. And he advised them to let loving kindness be found in them, and to be careful for that which is right, and to have considerate regard for the poor. Kings used to receive him and rejoice in him greatly, and he was greatly esteemed by every man, and regarded as a righteous father.

Whenever certain matters had to be done, and certain things had to be talked about, he was in the habit of going back to the inner mountain, and as something which was gratifying to him he would work his triumphs there.

On many occasions when he was sitting with those who went to him, or was walking about, he would hold his peace for a long time, and would keep wholly to himself, according to that which is written in the book of Daniel; and after a season he would utter in its order the word which would bind him to the brethren. Now those who saw him act in this manner used to know that some vision had appeared to him, and indeed on several occasions when he was in the mountain he saw things which were being done in Egypt.

Serapion, the Bishop, related that during the rule of the Bishop of Thmuis, the site of which city is marked by the Arab village Tamai-al-Amdid (he was surnamed Scholasticus, and died about A.D. 360), the time which he remained with him he had seen the blessed man for several days at a time laboring seriously with visions in this manner. One day whilst he was sitting down at work on the palm leaves he fell into a state of profound shock, and remained for an exceedingly long time seeing a vision of revelation, and he groaned frequently, and after a season he turned round to those who happened to be with him, and groaned again; and he trembled greatly, and began to pray, and he bent his knees and then stood up with his eyes full of tears. Those who saw the old man thus troubled were beginners in the monastic life, and they were greatly moved and were afraid with a great fear. After a season they began to entreat them to tell him what was the vision, which he had seen which had troubled him in this fashion. Then when they had pressed him, he sighed and said to them, "It would be much better for me to die than for that which has appeared to me to happen." Being urged by their entreaty, he spoke sadly and excitedly, saying, "Great wrath is coming upon the Church, which is about to be delivered over to men who are in no wise different from the wild beasts. I have seen an altar surrounded by mules which without mercy kicked all the people, both great and small, for they were as excited as a drove of horses which had been turned loose without bridles. When I sighed concerning these things, even you heard the sound of my sighs, and I heard a voice, which said, 'My altar shall be defiled.'"

Such were the things, which the old man saw. Two years later (about A.D. 343) the trouble with the Arians took place and the destruction of the churches by the hands of the pagans in the sight of all the people of the city who were gathered together. They caused the performance of the holy service to be set aside and abrogated. These pagans went forth into the streets of the city, and they thronged them and brought forth people from their shops, and compelled them to assemble with them, and before their eyes they performed the service of the Church and administered the Holy Mysteries. It was then that we understood what the kicking of the mules meant, that is to say the vision, which had appeared to the blessed man, and the whole work, which

was done with such iniquity and wickedness by the hands of the Arians in the Church.

When the blessed man saw this vision, and perceived that it was very grievous to the brethren, he consoled them, and said, "My beloved sons, do not be afflicted, for as God is angry now even so will He become pacified again, and after no great interval between these trials and injuries rest and peace shall come upon the Church of God. And you shall see those who have been persecuted for righteousness sake return to their places, and the Evil One, together with those who work his will, shall turn on his heels, and the horn of the righteous men who hold the true faith shall be exalted, and they shall openly proclaim the truth in the ears of a persecuted but believing nation. Listen then to these things from me, and take heed that you keep yourselves from fornication in respect of the faith, and from intercourse with people who are polluted; for the time of these things shall be short, and there shall be redemption for the people of God, and the righteous man shall live by faith."

Such were the things which were spoken by the blessed man, and it is not a great matter that such things were uttered and seen by the man who was crucified to the world, and to whom the world was crucified. For our Lord made the promise to believers, saying, "If you have in you faith like a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, depart and it shall depart, and there is nothing which shall be too hard for you." Again He said, "Whatever you shall ask of My Father in My Name shall be given to you." He commanded His disciples, saying, "Go out, and preach, and heal the sick, and cast out devils; freely you have received, freely give." Now the blessed man did not perform healings by his own power after the manner of a master, but only with prayer and the mention of the Name of Christ, so that it might be manifest to every man that it was not he who was the doer of these things, but that God did them by his hands. Thus the old man was triumphant in all such matters, for his strength was renewed from day to day even as is the youth of the eagle, by the fervour of his mind, and he had pleasure in the constant works which our Lord Jesus did for him.

He was afflicted and suffered much by reason of the people who were continually coming to him, and he enjoyed no respite from them, and he was therefore compelled to withdraw to the outer mountain. Moreover the judges and the governors of the country entreated him to come back to a place of habitation, because it was difficult for them to come near him on account of the numerous people who clung to him, and because of the fatigue of the journey which they had to endure in going to him. This matter was exceedingly hard to the blessed man, and he excused himself from such things. Now when the judges and the governors saw that he refused to do what they wanted,

they dealt craftily with him in this matter. They sent to him the Greeks and the other people who had been arrested for evil dealing and wickednesses of various kinds, and they entreated and begged him with much supplication to come back to the habitations of men so that he might work deliverance from prison for them. By such means and excuses the judges were able to see him continually, and the toil which he suffered on such journeys was not in vain, for his coming was beneficial to everyone.

Now the judges heard from him that which helped them to rule righteously, and they learned to know that they themselves were men, and were even as those who were subject to them, and that they must not behave towards them angrily, but judge them righteously, for, "With what judgement you judge you shall be judged." But although the blessed man rejoiced in the works of the fear of God, which he had done, he was more pleased with his habitation in the desert than with any other thing. And after he had been led by force by those men who had made supplication to him, and had entreated him to come to the outer mountain, so soon as he had performed for them his kind offices and had spoken to the governor words which were suitable to his majesty and dominion, he would hasten back to his place. And when the governor did homage to him, and begged him to remain with him for a day or two, the old man entreated him courteously to be allowed to depart, saying, "This thing is impossible, for as fish die if a man lift them out of the water, so, if we monks prolong stay with men, do our minds become perverted and troubled. Therefore it is right that as fish pass their lives beneath the waters we also should let our lives and works be buried in the wilderness." When the governor heard these and other things like to them, he marveled and said, "Verily this is a true servant of God. He speaks not that which comes from himself, but that which is given to him from heaven. How could this simple man possess such rich knowledge unless he was beloved by God?"

THE DEATH OF BALACIUS

A certain duke whose name was Balak (Balacius) persecuted the Church sorely at the instigation of the Arians, and his wickedness increased to such an extent that he would beat the nuns, and strip the monks naked and flog them. When the blessed old man heard of the wickedness of this man, he wrote a letter and sent it to him, and in it was thus written, "Behold, I see that wrath is coming upon you; desist therefore, and accept rebuke, and persecute not the believers, that perhaps the angel of wrath may be restrained, for behold, he has set out to come." When Balacius received the letter, he looked at it and laughed, and he spat on it, and took it up and threw it away. In his hatred he cursed the bringer

of the letter, and said to him, "Get back and tell these things to him that sent you." He said to him, "Inasmuch as you have exceedingly great regard for the churches and for those who are persecuted, behold I will speedily execute judgement upon you also."

But after these words he went no further than five days before wrath overtook him. Balacius set out to journey to the first stopping-place on the road from Alexandria which is called Chaereus. And as the duke Balacius and Nestor, the prefect of Alexandria, were riding together (they were riding two of Balacius' horses which were the gentlest of all his horses), before they arrived at the place of destination, the horses began to play together according to their custom. Suddenly the gentler of the two horses, that is to say, the animal on which Nestor the prefect rode, seized the thigh of Balacius with his mouth and dragged him from his horse and fell upon him and rent him like a dog. They took Balacius and brought him into Alexandria, and after three days he died. Thus the word of the blessed man actually came to pass, and wonder laid hold upon every man.

These were the things which Anthony was accustomed to say to the judges of this world, and he would give them counsel in a loving manner, that they should not be puffed up in their minds, and that they should not magnify themselves over the people, for there was no governor at that time who would not gladly hearken to him, and they repented of their evil deeds, and ascribed blessing to those who despised the world and became aliens to it. Moreover, he had such great care for those who were treated unjustly, and were plundered of their possessions, that he himself would bear all their troubles. His words were so grateful and pleasant to all those who drew near to him that many of the dwellers in villages and in towns, and pagans and men who served in the army would forsake their riches and their occupations and would go and enrol themselves in the order of the monks. He was regarded in Egypt as a good physician who had been given to the people from God.

For who came to him being afflicted and did not go away rejoicing? Or who came to him in sorrow because of the sufferings, which had come upon him and did not come back wholly encouraged? Who came to him full of rage and wrath and was not enriched with graciousness and long-suffering? When had a poor man come to him broken by poverty and did not afterwards by reason of his words or his sight of him despise all riches? When had a monk come to him sorrowful in mind and did not depart full of strength like a mighty man of war? When had a young man come to him with lusts burning in him, seeing that the old man had conquered in the strife, and did not go away with his lusts quenched and dead within him? Who is the youth who was afraid of the war which had come upon him, who came to him, and seeing

his triumphant old age did not henceforward contend in the forefront of the battle? Which man ever came to him troubled in mind and did not go away composed and in a state of reason?

There was found in him the gracious gift of being able to distinguish and understand the crafts of the devils, and the various ways whereby each one of them caused injury to man. He did not only comprehend those things which were done by the devil, but also the various causes whereby men were troubled and perturbed. He could inform them concerning the craft and cunning of the deceitful one. Every man hearkened to these things and learned them, and he went away bearing armour and a shield against the profound wiles of the evil. Moreover, how many were the virgins who saw the blessed man afar and left the men they were betrothed to, to be betrothed to Christ! Many people used to come to him from outside Egypt, and to all the questions he would return suitable answers. He was so great, and was so much beloved by every man, that after he had departed from this world, and had left all men orphans, the memory of him never died among the people, and every man gave himself courage by the repetition of his triumphs and of his words.

CONCERNING HIS DEATH

It is important that we should call to remembrance his death, relate how it took place, and in what manner he finished his life. For I know that you will be exceedingly pleased with this. Saint Anthony was accustomed to go out and visit the memorial stones of the brethren in the outer mountain. The matter of his death was not hidden from him, and he went away to visit them even when he knew that his departure was near. After he had spoken to the brethren according to his wish, he said to them, "This act which you have just performed is the end of all acts, I marvel at this world. Let each look for himself alone for it is time for me to die." He was then about one hundred and five years old.

When the brethren heard these things, they wept bitterly. Each of them began to embrace and kiss him. The old man, like a man from a strange country who is about to depart, with great gladness begged them to be quiet, and exhorted them, saying, "Do not be in despair by reason of your tribulations. Do not lax in your lives and works, but even as men who are dying daily prepare for life as I have already said, be watchful as ever. Keep your souls from thoughts of iniquity. Strive for good gifts, and guard yourselves against associating yourselves with the Meletians, who are heretics, for you know the cause of their schisms, and how cunning and bitter they are. Flee with all your might also from the doctrine of the Arians, for their wickedness is clearly

manifest. Take good heed to avoid them, and do not be like them forever, neither if they be mighty in their help, nor if they be many in bearing burdens, for however often error raises up her nest it shall never be able to contend against the truth. Be therefore, free from all intercourse with them, and thus you shall be able to take good heed to the true doctrine of our fathers, and to the preaching of the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, which you have received from the Scriptures.”

When the brethren heard about the matter of his departure, they entreated him that he would remain with them in order that his course might be ended there. He would not accept their request for many reasons, which he had made known in his silence, but for the following reason especially. The Egyptians were in the habit of taking the dead bodies of righteous men, and especially those of the blessed martyrs, and of embalming them and placing them not in graves, but on biers in their houses. For the Egyptians thought that by so doing they were doing them honour. The blessed old man had on very many occasions begged the Bishops to preach to the people and to command them to cease from this habit. He himself used to entreat and exhort the multitudes who came to him, saying, “This work is neither seemly nor right. Moreover, the burial places of the early Fathers, the Prophets, and the Apostles are known to this day, and even the grave of our Lord Who rose on the third day. By these words he showed clearly that it was a transgression of a command for a man not to hide in the ground the bodies of those who were dead, even though they were righteous men.” Therefore many hearkened and were persuaded not to do so, and they laid their dead in the ground, and buried them in it. They thanked God because they had accepted his entreaty, which was seemly. It was through fear of this thing that he would not grant the entreaty of the brethren and remain with them, but departed to his own place.

After a few months he became sick. He cried out to the brethren who were with him (now these were only two in number, and they had been with him from the time when his old age began, which was nearly fifteen years before, and they ministered to him with the greatest care). He said to them, “Even as it is written, ‘Behold, I go the way of my fathers.’ For I have felt within myself for the past days that I have been called by my Lord. Observe how carefully you can maintain this contest. Take good heed that you do not lose the long suffering which you have acquired. Like men who are just beginning the strife, increase it more and more and add to it each day. You are well acquainted with the baneful devils and their craftiness. You know well this fact, that if you please they shall be accounted as nothing by you. Do not be terrified by them, but always take refuge in Christ. Remember everything that you have heard from me during all this time, which you have been with me.

Do not have any interactions whatever with the Arians, the heretics, for you know how filthy they are in my sight because of their blasphemy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Take also heed then diligently at all times that you cleave to the Spirit of Christ. Be friends and associates of just men that they may receive you into their everlasting habitations as friends and men of whom they have good knowledge. Therefore meditate upon these things and keep them in your minds. If your minds are set upon me, and you remember me as a father, do not permit any man to take my body and carry it to Egypt, lest, according to the custom, which they have, they embalm me and lay me up in their houses. I came into this desert to avoid this happening. You know that I have continually made exhortation concerning this thing and begged that it should not be done, and you well know how much I have blamed those who observed this custom. Dig a grave then, bury me in it, hide my body under the earth, and let my words be observed carefully by you. Do not tell any man where you have laid me. There I shall be until the Resurrection of the dead, when I shall receive again this body without corruption.

Divide my garments into lots, and give one leather tunic and the covering of this my bed, to Bishop Athanasius. He gave to me the bed covering when it was new; but now it has become old. Give Bishop Serapion the other leather coat. This covering of my bed, which is made of hair, you keep it for yourselves. Therefore, my children, abide in peace, for, behold, Anthony brings his journey to an end, and goes where Divine Grace shall bring him.”

When he had spoken these words, he straightaway stretched out his legs, upon which the brethren began to cry out to him, and to kiss him. His face was full of unspeakable joy at the meeting of those who had come for him, and it resembled that of a man when he sees a friend whom it rejoices him to meet. So the blessed man held his peace, died, and was united to his fathers.

Then the brethren, according to the command which they had received from him, wrapped him in the garment which he wore, carried him out, dug a hole in the ground and buried his body in the earth. No man knew where they buried him except those two brethren who laid him in the earth. Whoever received any one of the clothes of the blessed Anthony regarded it as a most valuable possession, for whenever a man looked there at he imagined that he was looking at the blessed man in it. Whenever any man puts on one of his garments he felt as if he were arrayed in the commandments and promises of the blessed Anthony.

Here ends the history of the life of the blessed old man in the body, and the previous narrative which dealt with the beginning of his deeds and labors; and if these appear to be too small in comparison with the number of the triumphs of the blessed man, still from these you will be able to imagine how

great was this man of God, who, from his earliest youth to his old age, never desisted from his career in the fear of God. Old age did not reduce his vigour or compel him to gratify the body. He was not urged by the sickness of his body even to let water touch with his feet. Whilst he was thus keeping his body in restraint, God preserved him unharmed. For, in spite of his great old age, his eye waxed and did not dim. None of his teeth dropped out. Both his feet and hands were in a sound and healthy state. Notwithstanding that he kept his body low in respect of food, his appearance was more glorious than all those who fed themselves luxuriously on dainty meats, wore fine clothes, and who made use of baths. Moreover he possessed strength, which was out of all proportion to his aged body.

Inasmuch as the fame of the blessed Anthony has gone to every place, and every man holds him in wonder, and worships him, it is a certain sign of the truth of his acts and deeds and of his perfect love towards God. For he did not become known to all the world by means of his discourse, or by the wisdom of words, or by means of crafty plans and schemes, but by radiant righteousness towards God, for it was God who performed this work, and he who has a doubtful mind about this shall be held in contempt. Otherwise how is it possible that a man who lived in seclusion and who dwelt alone in the desert should become known and proclaimed abroad in Spain, Albania, Rome, Africa and other countries unless God, whom Anthony confessed from the earliest times, had revealed him to them? For although these men of God live in secret places and do not desire to be seen or known, yet our Lord makes them to shine like lamps upon all men. Thus also let those who hear me, and who are mighty men before God, and who love His commandments, be persuaded to keep their steps, not that they may be praised but that they may be justified. Let all the brethren then who are monks read these things so that they may know how it is right for them to live their lives, and let this little book be to every man like the testament of a righteous father who had divided his riches and possessions among his beloved sons in our Lord. For when we gather together and reveal to the believers those means whereby he gained possession of and collected all his wealth, we deliver up riches and give them to prosperous and beloved sons, even as does the man who gathered up wealth for his family.

Let every man know then and have confidence that our Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer honours those who honour Him, and who serve Him to the end, and that He does not only invite them to the kingdom of heaven and lead them into it, but in this world also, even though they live in seclusion and hide themselves, He reveals them, and proclaims abroad their names for their own glory, and for the benefit of our humanity. If it be seemly, do not

excuse yourselves from reading these things even in the sight of the heathen, for perhaps even by hearing the same they may become convinced that our Lord Jesus Christ is not only God and the Son of God, but also that for those who serve Him in purity of heart, and who believe in Him in truth, those devils who are imagined to be gods take to flight at the name of Christ. That they are not gods the matter itself makes known, for behold, they are held in contempt, and they are trodden down like the furrows of a field, and they are expelled as thieves and destroyers by the believers everywhere.

Here ends, by the help of our Lord, the history of the triumphs of the blessed Anthony, the athlete and the perfect man, who triumphed in the contest and received the crown of victory. By his prosperous trafficking he made double his merchandise through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who helped him and made him to triumph, the Lord of righteous men and the conqueror.

BOOK I

The Paradise of Palladius: First History

AND AGAIN WE BEGIN TO WRITE THE BOOK OF THE TRIUMPHS of the Holy Fathers who were monks, which is called Paradise. The epistle of Palladius the bishop of the city of Helenopolis, which was written to Lausus the Prefect who asked him to write for him an account of the lives and deeds of the fathers who were monks; and he wrote thus:

Palladius the Bishop to Lausus the Prefect, Greeting.

I ascribe blessing to your beautiful desire, for we may begin this epistle with blessing, because whilst many men are devoted to vain things, and build buildings of stone in which there is no profit, you have shown yourself strenuous to learn concerning the building of the words of the narratives of holy men. For there is One alone Who has no deed of learning that is to say, God, Who is over everything, for He exists of Himself, and there is no other being who existed before Him. All rational beings are learners, because they are beings who have been made and created, ranks of the celestial hosts that existed first of all, the orders of beings who are the most exalted of all possess

teachers in the Trinity, and Who is exalted above everything. The orders of beings of the second group learn from the beings of the first group, and those which belong to the third group learn from those of the second group, which is above them, and in this manner each of the later groups learns from that groups above it, even down to the lowest group of all. For those among them who are superior in respect, of knowledge and excellence teach knowledge to those who are inferior to them. Therefore those who imagine that they have no need of teachers, or will not be convinced by those who teach them things of good, are sick with the need of knowledge, the mother and the producer of pride. Those who are princes and the foremost ones among these in respect of destruction are those who intentionally fell from sojourning in heaven, and from its service. These are the devils that fly in the air because they forsook the heavenly Teacher and rebelled.

For polished words and sentences, or words strung together in admirable order are not doctrine, for these things are for the most part found with evil-doers and sinners. But this is doctrine, which is the correction of the natural habits and dis-position, and the leading of a life of spiritual excellence according to rule, by which I mean the possession of the faculty which shall make a man superior to affliction and to emotion, to timidity, and to wrath. This faculty shall make him to possess freedom of speech before every man, and shall, through the fervour of Divine Love, produce works that shall be like to coals of fire. If doctrine is not this, the Great Teacher would not have said to His disciples, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." For He did not instruct His Apostles merely in the beauty of speech, without, at the same time, manifesting a proof in His own Person. He did not cause grief to any man except those who spurned doctrine, and those who hated their teachers. It is right that the soul which leads its life in God should either learn in faith that which it does not know, or should learn wisely that of which it has knowledge; but if it will do neither of these things it is, if it be possible, sick through madness.

The beginning of instruction (or discipline) is the fullness of doctrine, and density of speech is a helper of the fear of God. For with these things the soul of he who loves God hungers continually. Be strong then, and play the man. Farewell. And may God grant you the gift of pursuing at all times the knowledge of Christ.

The Plan of the Book of Paradise

IN THIS BOOK ARE WRITTEN THE EXCELLENT DEEDS and the marvelous lives of the holy and blessed Fathers, who took upon themselves the yoke of the solitary life, and who made themselves to be remote from the world, and who lived in the desert, and who wished to live wholly the heavenly life, and to travel on the road which leads to the kingdom of heaven. Let us emulate their example and endeavor to do with all our might what they did! And together with these we commemorate also the marvelous women who led their lives in the Divine Spirit, and who waxed exceedingly old, and who with a brave mind brought to an end the strife of the labors of spiritual excellence, according to the Divine manifestation and love, for they wished to lay hold upon their souls, and to bind upon their heads the crown of holiness and impassibility.

As for myself, (because of the sweet manners of the man by whom I have been commanded to write, whose mind is full of learning, whose habits are those of a lover of peace, who fears God in his heart, who loves Christ in his mind, who in the things which are needful is an associate, and who, because of all these qualities, has been chosen from among many, and has been honored with the highest rank of all), being protected by the might of the Holy Spirit especially if it be right to speak the truth: I would rouse up our heavy minds to the contemplation of the things which are spiritually excellent, so that we may strive to imitate the most excellent lives and deeds of the pious men, and of the immortal and spiritual fathers, whose lives in the flesh were passed in laborious and stern service and in pleasing God. Of the virtues of such athletes of the fear of God it is my desire to set down some account in writing and to send it to you, and I would make clear in my discourse the manifest spiritual excellences of each one of these great men. He who loves a divine and spiritual desire like to this is yourself, Lausus, who are triumphant among men, and who, in accordance with the Divine will, has been established as the guardian of this kingdom that loves Christ.

But inasmuch as I have not been trained in language, and as I possess spiritual knowledge only in the very smallest degree, and am unequal to the task of describing, the company of the holy Fathers and their spiritual lives and works, I am afraid of the greatness of your command which surpasses my capacity. I have, therefore, up to this present, been urging myself to escape from this work, because I am in great need both of the wisdom which is essential externally and of spiritual understanding. But being put to shame first of all by the strenuousness of the excellence of him that stirred me up to do this work, and considering also the bene-fit which shall accrue to those who shall come

across these histories, and being, moreover, afraid of the danger of the penalty of disobedience, which is right, I will first of all commit the weight of the matter to the Providence of God. And I will, with all diligence, make use of the prayers of the holy Fathers, so that I may be able to mount up as upon wings to the place where their contests were waged, and may tell the story briefly of those athletes, who though young became great and divine men who did valiantly and who triumphed in the works and deeds of spiritual excellence. And I will also relate the histories of those blessed women who were adorned with the fair garb of the monastic life, and who attained to pre-eminence in divine labors. Some of these divine persons of whom I am about to tell the story, I was held to be worthy to see face to face. Concerning the heavenly lives of the others who died in the contest of the fear of God I have learned from the athletes of Christ, who were arrayed in God.

Through very many cities, villages, in caves and holes in the earth, and in the tabernacles which the monks had in the desert for a distance as far as a man could walk have I gone round about for the sake of the labor of the fear of God, and I have set down in writing with exactness the things which I have seen. I have also made known to you in this book the things which I have heard from the holy Fathers concerning the triumphs of great men, and concerning the women who for the sake of the hope which is in Christ performed mighty works which were above nature, and I have sent it to your hearing which loves divine words. O you Lausus who are triumphant among men, and who are fair among the friends of God, and who are the ornament of this believing and God-fearing kingdom, and are the true friend and servant of God, I have written down for you as far as my feebleness is able, the history of the strife of each of the athletes of Christ, both male and female, a name which is honorable and which merits praise. I have narrated to you only very few of their exceedingly great triumphs, which belong to each one of these athletes. For many of them I have added the names of their families, cities, and the places where they lived.

We have also commemorated the men and women who, indeed, attained to the highest excellence in the labors of the spiritual life. And also them who, because of the pride, which is the mother of that quality which is called vainglory, were brought down to the lowest depths of Sheol. So they wasted the great work in the spiritual qualities which they had only acquired after a very long time, and the triumphs in the ascetic virtues which they had won, through their pride and boasting in one brief moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Nevertheless, by the Divine Grace of our Redeemer, and by the carefulness of the holy Fathers, and by the cherishing influence of the mercy of the Spirit,

they were plucked finally out of the net of the Calumniator.

Counsels to Lausus

Let the following be before your mind in all acts, and you shall not sin.

1. To do good to the fool and to bury the dead; both are alike.
2. It is right that a man should put on armor over the breast, and the word of our Redeemer Christ over grief; armor and shield will hide the breast, but only faith and action can hide the soul.
3. As it is possible to see the skill of the painter on a small tablet, so a small gift shows the greatness of the disposition of the soul.
4. Have no confidence in the belief that what is placed outside your soul is your possession.
5. Clothes and raiment drape statues, but habits and manners drape men.
6. An evil word is the beginning of evil deeds.
7. Speak according to what is right, where it is right, and concerning the things, which are right. Do not listen to what is not right.
8. It is better to shake a stone vainly than to utter a vain word.
It is better to be under subjection to the Barbarians than to evil passions.
9. The excellence of a horse is made apparent in battle, and the disposition of a friend is put to the test in tribulation.
10. It is impossible to divide the sea, and it is also impossible to still its waves, although for them it is always easy to still themselves.
11. The wise and God-fearing man is he who hates what is not right.
12. The gentle and gracious man is he who treads pride under foot.
He who is set upon what is the contrary of this is one who is governed by arrogance.
13. Constant prayer is the strength, and the armor, and the wall of the soul.
14. Wine makes the body warm, and the word of God warms the soul.
15. Know that not even much time will bring oblivion upon one act, which you would hide.
16. The believing mind is a temple of God, which is necessary for a man to adorn daily and to burn incense in it, inasmuch as it is God Who dwells there.

Numbers upon numbers of books at diverse times and in various ways have they left to the habitations of men, and some of them are according to the Mind which is above and Divine Grace, and were written for the edification and protection of those who wished to follow carefully after the faith and the doctrine of our Redeemer. Some of them are according to the adulation of the children of men, and the corrupt mind, which is mad after the lusts of the body, and some of them are for the consolation of those who destroy vainglory. Others are from some vain madness and the agency of that evil Devil who hates the things which are good, and their writers made use of arrogance and hatred, and in order to corrupt the children of men whose minds have been laid waste and who have no understanding they introduced them that they might defile the purity of the holy Catholic Church, and hinder its pure life and deeds of ascetic excellence.

Moreover, it has seemed to me, I who fall short of the hope which is in Christ, and who am ashamed before the command of your great mindedness, O you, the man who loves doctrine, that I ought first of all to narrate to you the story of how I was reared, and about the gradual growth of my mind of such excellence as I possess towards God.

I lived a life of rule and was in a monastery of solitary brethren for the first part of my life. That is to say until the thirty-third year of my age. I served the office of Bishop for twenty years. Thus the whole period of my life has included fifty-six years.

It is absolutely necessary, inasmuch as it has seemed to me that you are very anxious to hear the triumphs of the holy Fathers, because of the divine and spiritual profit which is in it, that I should tell you in writing concerning the men and the women, whom I have myself seen some, and concerning others of whom I have heard from believing men. Also concerning others whom I have met with when I was travelling about in the land of Egypt, in Libya, in the Thebaid, in the region of Syene, among men of Tabenna, in Mesopotamia, in Palestine, in Syria, in the countries of the West, the Romans, and the people of the Campagna. I must also set down in writing with careful exactitude the history of everything which appertains closely to these men from the very beginning and set before you as an example what will be a most excellent memorial and a benefit of the soul, that is to say, a certain binding up, so that its means you may be able to dispel from your soul all the slumber of error (which comes into being through irrational desire), all the doubts of the soul in respect of faith, sluggishness in respect of the things which are useful, all loathing, all and littleness of soul, (concerning habits of virtue, meaning the

keenness of wrath and perturbation), and animal ferocity and empty fear.

Then shall you flee from the vain and corrupt delight of this world, and through your constant eager desire you shall draw near to the hope which is in God; and you shall govern yourself in the desire of the fear of God, and those who are with you, and those who are under your authority, and moreover, to him that fears God you will become king. For through these triumphs all those who have become friends of Christ shall hasten to be united to Him, and they shall also look for the loosing of the soul from the body, for it is well known that daily they will do this, even as it is written, "I am constrained by the good desire which I possess to wish to become free and to be with Christ." Exceedingly excellent is all that which is said, "Make ready your works for your going forth, and prepare your field." For he who remembers death continually, and keeps in his mind the knowledge that he must most certainly die, will neither be negligent of nor commit sin in respect of great matters, even according to what is said, "In all your words remember your end, and you will never commit sin." Beside all these things I will add this also, so that you may not belittle the tradition of this our faulty history, and may not hold in contempt the simplicity and want of polish of the language of it; for this matter appertains not to the divine doctrine, that we should compose speech with wise skill, but we should strengthen the mind with sure and certain words of understanding, according to that which is said, "Open your mouth with the word of truth, and judge every man in a sound manner," and moreover, "You shall not forget the narratives of the old men, because they also have them from their fathers."

I therefore, O you lover of doctrine and the godly man, have lighted upon many things with the holy men, not through making use of ordinary thought, but by making journeys among them which have lasted thirty days, yes, even thirty days twice told. And I say it, as before God, that in travels and journeys I would have trodden the whole of the territory of the Greeks so that I might have the opportunity of conversing with each of the lovers of God, and I would have undertaken the labor of a journey such as this gratefully so that I might be able to traffic for a profit which I did not possess. For if that man who was far more excellent than I am, and perhaps far more excellent than the whole world, and who in his life and works, and in his knowledge, and in his wise opinions of the Spirit, and in his faith which was in Christ, surpassed many, I mean the blessed man Paul, who in order that he might see James, and Cephas (Peter), and John made a journey from Tarsus to Judea. And it is well known that he related the fact of this journey somewhat as a boast when he was declaring abroad and revealing his labors in order that he might stimulate those who

were living lives sluggish and indolent in respect of spiritual excellence. And when he said, "I went up to Jerusalem that I might see Cephas," not that he was denying the spiritual excellence of Peter of which he had received information by report, but because he was longing for converse with him also.

If this Paul had need of converse with Peter, how much more did I, who am a debtor of ten thousands talents, need to do this (i.e. to visit the holy men), for the sake of the benefit, not for the sake of any good which I could do them but for the sake of the advantage which I the sinful man should myself gain? Moreover, the things which writers have written down about the holy Fathers, I mean Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Elijah, and the other saints, were not composed and narrated to glorify them, but that those who should use them might profit thereby.

Therefore, O chaste and believing man Lausus, servant of God, knowing these things, and having also instructed yourself in many others, be convinced by our discourse also and let the matters of it be laid up in your God-fearing mind as in a secure storehouse which is not accustomed to be disturbed by evil things of diverse kinds, either visible or invisible, and which only constant prayer and the converse which concerns the service of the soul can make to be moved.

For many of these brethren who in the fear of God won spiritual excellence, and who waxed great in ascetic labors and loving kindness, and who were famed because of their perfect chastity and virginity, and who protracted to great length their meditations upon the Holy Scriptures, and placed their trust upon their strenuousness in spiritual doctrine, were never held to be worthy of the state of impassability, because they served with a mind which possessed not discretion and employed only the form of the fear of God. And because they were diseased with the love of external converse, from which are produced all vices which enter into a man from without, and which eradicate that which is the mother of the service which takes place in the soul. Be strong, therefore, in all wisdom, and nourish not your soul in the riches which you have received, having made them sufficiently little by means of the gifts to those who are needy. So that the ministration which arises may perfect the service of excellence, for this comes into being neither through any urging whatsoever, nor through the foolish thoughts of any form whatsoever for the sake of vainglory. And do not bind yourself to do anything under a penalty secured by oaths as many men do, as for example those who for the sake of vainglory strive eagerly neither to eat nor to drink, for though by the force of such oaths they may bring their feeble will into subjection, through this same thing they fall miserably, either by means of pleasures and the loathing which

follows, or through the sickness of the body, or else through the delightful gratification of some lust they bring forth falsehood.

And as you receive what is good according to reason, so according to reason shall you make yourself to be remote from what is evil, and you shall never sin at all. For by the word of God shall all motions of fear be extinguished, and you shall draw near to the things which bring you profit, and shall trample down those which would cause you loss. For the righteous the Law was not laid down.

It is better to drink wine in moderation than to drink water immoderately, and it appears to me that those who drink wine in moderation are holy men, and that those who pridefully use water in an immoderate fashion are depraved and pleasure-loving. Do not therefore ascribe blame or praise to the eating or not eating of food, or to the drinking or not drinking of wine, but ascribe praise, or woe, to those who make use properly or improperly of meat and drink. Joseph in olden time drank wine with the Egyptians, and was in no way injured in his mind, for he took good heed to the admonitions of his understanding. But Pythagoras, and Diogenes, and Plato, and with them also the Manichaeans, and other sets of philosophers did not, and they came to such a pitch of licentiousness and vainglory that they even forgot the God of the universe and worshipped soulless images. On the other hand, the blessed Apostle Peter and those who were with him drew near to wine and made use of it, and because of this the Jews reproached our Lord, the Redeemer of all men and their Teacher, and made complaints against Him, saying, "Why do not Your disciples fast like John?" Again they lifted themselves up against the disciples and blamed them, saying, "Why does your master eat and drink with tax-collectors and sinners?" They did not make their complaints about bread and water only, but also about wine and delicacies, for it is evident that they only wanted to lay blame upon the disciples in everything.

Upon which our Redeemer made answered, "John came in the path of righteousness, neither eating nor drinking. It is well known that flesh and wine are here referred to, for it was impossible for him to live without food of other kinds and you say that he has a devil in him; and the Son of Man has come, eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax gatherers and sinners!'" What then is it right for us to do, so that we may neither go after those who make complaints of our acts, nor after those who praise them? For we must either fast with John according to discretion, even though the Jews said that there was a devil in him, and that he was certainly mad, or we must drink wine with Christ with knowledge, if the body shall have need of it, even though the children of men shall say concerning us,

“Behold a glutton and a winebibber.”

For in very truth neither the eating of food nor the abstaining is anything, but the faith and love which are made perfect in works; for when a man follows after faith wholly by actions, he who eats and drinks is blameless for faiths sake, for everything which is not of faith is sin. But perhaps one of those who love the carnal lusts, or perhaps one of those who sin not, will say that if they eat in faith, or if they do anything else by the irrational thought of the carnal appetite, or through a corrupt intent, those who support themselves on faith commit sill. Our Redeemer made a distinction, saying, “By their fruit you shall know them.” And the fruits may be recognized by the word of God, and by spiritual wisdom, according to the word of the blessed Apostle, who said, “Love, peace, gladness, suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, patient endurance,” these are the fruits of the Spirit according to the word of the Apostle.

Whoever is eager to possess these fruits will never, without reason and without thought on any occasion, eat flesh, or drink wine, or dwell with a man with evil intent. Moreover, the blessed Paul says, “Whoever is about to strive in a contest preserves his mind free from every other thought, and “thus keeps his body healthy, and makes himself to be remote from the things which would make him fat.” But if he fall into sickness, or into severe sufferings, or he becomes a companion to afflictions which fight against him externally, he must then make use of meat and drink by way of a binding up, and a healing medicine for the things which work tribulation for him. Let us then keep ourselves remote from the evil things which are done in the soul, I mean anger, and envy, and vainglory, and dejection, and evil discourse, and the suspicion which is not seemly, for whilst a man is giving thanks to God he cannot commit sin.

Therefore, having spoken sufficiently concerning these things, I have another entreaty to bring near to the love of doctrine which is in you, that is to say, I would that you flee with all your strength from the converse of men from whom you can gain no benefit, although their outside skin be ornamented with various patterns; even if they be orthodox they will cause you to suffer loss, and if they be heretics that loss will be very much greater. And although they appear to be exceedingly aged, and their bodies be shriveled and withered, and it may seem to you that you can not in any way be injured by them because of the beautiful dispositions which are in them, that which is in them and which appears to you to be a small matter, will do you an injury; for you shall become lax in your mind in respect of them, and whilst laughing at them you will become unduly exalted, and that you should be driven to

arrogance would be a loss for you. Follow then after the mind of pious men and women who shine with the light which enters in through the windows, so that by means of these, like a book the lines of which are extremely close together, you may be able clearly to see what is in your heart by comparison with them, either of sluggishness or strenuousness. For there are very many things which testify concerning spiritual excellence, such as the colour of the face which blossoms with ascetic labors, and the manner in which the apparel is put on, and a peaceable manner, and a mode of speech which is not inflated, and modesty of the countenance, and a discourse which is not crooked, and cheerfulness of the mind, and an understanding which is full of knowledge; by these things both your own fair beauty will be made strong, and also all those who follow after the goal of the fear of God, even though they be living in a state of negligence or in some other similar vice. For, according to the word of the wise man, the behavior of a man, and the gait of his legs, and the laughter of his mouth testify concerning him.

1. The History of Abba Isidore

BY THE HELP OF OUR LORD I WILL, therefore, begin to write for you, O Lausus the histories of the holy Fathers, and I will omit nothing concerning them which I will not make known in my discourse, neither the histories of those who lived in cities, nor of those who lived in villages or in caves, nor of those who became famous in the desert. No, I will even add to my discourse the histories of those who lived among the general assembly of a community, for no special country or place in which they lived and in which they perfected the life of ascetic excellence needs to be sought out, for everywhere they led the pure life and conversation of chastity and integrity, and performed the deeds of the simple mind in which, through the help of Christ, they did and fulfilled the lives and deeds of angels.

At first, when I went to Alexandria in the second consulship of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, who now because of the orthodoxy of his faith in Christ sojourns with the angels, I met in the city a wonderful man who was adorned in every respect with the most beautiful qualities of speech, and knowledge, and life and conversation, whose name was Isidore. He was a priest and was the overseer (i.e. manager or secretary) of the hospital, of the church of Alexandria, and it was said of him that in his early youth he had lived in a monastery in the desert, and that he triumphed in the contest of the ascetic life. I saw, moreover, his cell in the mountain of Nitria. I met him when he was

an old man seventy years of age, and when he had lived fifteen years longer he departed from this world. Now to the end of his life this holy man never put on either a linen tunic or even a head-covering; he never washed, and he never ate flesh, and he never ate a full meal seated comfortably at a table; and yet, through Divine grace, his body shone.

He possessed a sound and healthy body, and he was, by the grace of Christ, so fully endowed with strength that those who beheld him and who did not know him would not be persuaded that he lived a life of self-denial, and they thought and said that he must lead a life of great luxury and that he must eat abundantly of rich meats. If I were to undertake to declare the marvelous character of his life and deeds, and wished to recount the excellence of his soul, and to make manifest every fact concerning them, all time would not suffice for me to declare them, nor would paper suffice for me to write them. For this man was so lovingly merciful and so full of peace that, by the reason of orthodoxy of his faith in Christ, even his enemies who did not believe were put to shame by him, from his early youth up, and at his good deeds and at the abundance. Of his graciousness were put to the blush; for he was gracious to every man.

He possessed the gift of the spirit and the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and the comprehension of divine learning, and he kept the commandments so strictly that at noon, the time when the brethren were accustomed to take their food, the mind of this holy man was carried away as it were in a slumber, and the greater number of the brethren were marveling at his example and knowledge, and many, many times they tried to persuade him to relate to them the things which he saw, and entreated him to tell them concerning the marvelous state which had come upon him, but he could not be persuaded to do so. Finally he was constrained by the power of their love, and he answered and said to them, "My mind departed and was carried away by contemplation, and I was snatched away by the similitude of a thought, and I was fed with the food of glory, which, however, it is impossible for me to describe."

I knew this man, and on several occasions he burst into tears at the table; and when I asked him, "What is the cause of these tears?" He said to me, "I am ashamed of myself because, being a rational being, I eat the food of an irrational creature; I desire to live in paradise, where I should enjoy the food which is imperishable. For although we have received that power which is from Christ, yet am I drawn to partake of the food which perish would partake of the food which is spiritual, and I would that I were in the paradise of delights in the dominion which God has given to me; and behold I am eating the food of the beasts."

To this man were known all the members of the Roman Senate and the freeborn women of the nobles of Rome, because in former times he had gone with Bishop Athanasius to that city, and he had also been there with the holy man Bishop Demetrius. Isidore, having great riches, and wanting nothing, was accustomed to give abundantly and without sparing to the poor and needy. When he had ended his days and came to die, he made no will whatever; and he left no money to any man, and he left nothing to his brethren. To his sisters who were virgins he also left nothing, and he made no provision at all for them, but committed them to the care of Christ, saying, "He who created you will provide for your living and also whatsoever things of which you have need, even as He has provided for me." With his sisters was a company of about seventy sisters.

When I had come to him to be his disciple, and I was persuading him to hold me worthy of the rank of those who lived in a monastery, being in the vigor of my early manhood and needing not the word only but also the labor of the body, and severe physical exercises, even like the young unbroken animal, I begged him to teach me his beautiful way of life and to let me dwell by myself, for I was heedful of nothing, being in the vigor of my early manhood, and I had no great need of doctrine, but only to learn to subdue the passions of the flesh. Then, like a good teacher, he took me outside the city to a place which was six miles distant, and in which there was restful solitude, and he handed me over to an anchorite whose name was Dorotheos.

2. The History of Dorotheos of Thebes

DOROTHEOS OF THEBES' LIFE WAS ONE OF SPIRITUAL EXCELLENCE. He had lived in a cave for sixty years. He commanded me to live with him, and to lead a life of self-denial with him for a period of three years, so that the passions of the flesh might leave me. For the blessed Isidore knew that blessed old man, and he knew that his life was stern and severe, and he admonished me, saying, "When you have completed this period of three years, return to me for the remainder of the doctrine of spiritual knowledge." But I was unable to fulfill these three years with him, on account of a severe illness into which I fell, and so I departed from Dorotheos before the end of the period, and I returned to him that had brought me out, and entered his abode that I might learn the doctrine of the spirit.

The life of Dorotheos was one of exceedingly hard toil, and the manner of it was severe, and his food was meager and wretched, for he lived on dry

bread. And he used to go round about in the desert by the side of the sea the whole day long in the heat of the noonday sun and collect stones with which he built cells, which he used to give to the brethren who were unable to build cells for themselves; and he used to finish one cell each year. One day I said to the holy man, "Father, why work you thus in your old age? For you will kill your body in all this heat." He said to me, "I kill it lest it should kill me." He used to eat one small bread cake, which weighed about six ounces, each day, and a little bundle of green herbs; and he drank water by measure. What then? I know not. As God is my witness I never saw this man stretch out his legs and lie down as men are accustomed to do; and he never slept upon a bed of palm leaves, or upon anything else, but he used to work the whole night long weaving baskets made of palm leaves to provide himself with the daily bread which he required and food.

I imagined at first that he used to work in this manner because I was present, and then I thought, "Perhaps it is only for my sake, and to show me how to perform such severe labors, that he does this." So I made enquiries of many of those who had been his disciples and who were then living by themselves and were emulating his spiritual excellencies, and I also asked others of his disciples who were living by his side if in very truth he always labored in this wise, and they said to me, "He has held to this practice from his youth up, and he has never been in the habit of sleeping according to what is right. In the daytime he never sleep willingly, but sometimes when he is working with his hands, or when he is eating, he closes his eyes and is snatched away by slumber. "As he sits working he eats, and unless slumber overcame him suddenly he would never sleep at all. Many and many a time he is overcome by slumber while he is eating, and the morsel of bread falls out of his mouth because he is overcome by drowsiness." And when from time to time I used to urge him to sit down, or to throw himself upon a mat of palm leaves and to rest a little, he would answer me saying in a grieved manner, "If you are able to persuade the angels to sleep, then you will be able to persuade me."

One day, towards the ninth hour, Dorotheos sent me to the fountain from which he drank water to fetch him some water, so that he might eat his meal, for he used to eat about this time, and when I had gone there I chanced to see a viper going down the well; and because of my fear I was unable to fill the pitcher with water, and I went back to him, and said to him, "O father, we shall die, for I have seen a viper going down into the water." When he heard these words he laughed reverently, and constrained himself, and he lifted up his face and looked at me not a little time, and he shook his head, and said to me, "If it were to happen that Satan had the power to show you in every fountain

an asp, or again to cast into them vipers, or serpents, or tortoises, or any other kinds of venomous reptiles, would you be able to do without drinking water entirely?" When he had said these words to me, he went out and departed to the fountain and drew water, and brought it back. Having made the sign of the Cross over it he straightaway drank there from before he ate anything. He constrained me to drink and said to me, "Where the seal of the Cross is, the wickedness of Satan has no power to do harm."

This blessed man Isidore, the overseer of the hospital in Alexandria, related to me the following story, which is worthy of record, and he heard it from the blessed Anthony where he lived with him in the desert in the days of Emperor Maximinus, the prosecutor.

3. The History of the Virgin Potamiaena

THERE WAS A CERTAIN YOUNG VIRGIN CALLED POTAMIAENA who was exceedingly beautiful and was a Christian. She was the handmaiden of a certain worldly man who was given over to a life of pleasure, and she lived in very great luxury, and her master flattered her greatly, wishing to destroy her. Being unable to bring her into subjection to his will, he at length was seized with madness, and he became furiously angry with her and delivered her over to a certain prefect who lived at that time in Alexandria (i.e. Basilides), saying, "She is a Christian, and she reviles the government, and utters blasphemies against the Emperor."

He promised to give him much money saying, "If she can be persuaded to do my will, keep her for me without disgrace and punishment, but if she persists in her obstinacy of heart, punish her with every kind of torture you please, and do not let her alive to laugh at me and at my luxurious way of life." When they brought the valiant woman before the throne of the judges, she was greatly moved, but she was not persuaded; and the prefect tortured the body of the virgin of Christ with many different kinds of tortures. Then again after these things he thought out a crafty plan, and invented a method of punishment by torture which was as follows. He commanded them to bring a huge cauldron which was full of pitch, and to light a fierce fire under it, and when the pitch was melted and was boiling, the judge cried to her, saying, "Go you and submit yourself to the will of your lord, and know you if you do not this thing you shall straightaway fall into this cauldron." When she heard this, she sealed her soul, and answered and said, "You judge with iniquity, O judge, for you command me to become subject to fornication. I am the

handmaiden of Christ, and it is right that I should stand before His throne without blemish."

When the judge heard this, he was straightaway greatly troubled and filled with wrath, and he commanded them to bring her and to cast her into the cauldron. Then the virgin said to him, "I adjure you, by the head of the Emperor, if you condemn me to this thing of your own self, to command them to put me into the cauldron little by little, without stripping my apparel from me, so that you may know the patient endurance which I have through Christ for the sake of my purity." As they were dipping her little by little into the cauldron, for a very short space of time, immediately the pitch reached her neck it became cold; thus she delivered her soul to God, and she was crowned with a good martyrdom. A great congregation of holy men and women were made perfect (i.e. they suffered martyrdom) at that time in the church of Alexandria, and they became worthy of that land which the meek inherit. Potamiaena was martyred, with her mother Marcella, in the reign of Septimius Severus. Here end the triumphs of Isidore, and Dorotheos, and the virgin Potamiaena.

4. The History of Didymus (Born A.D. 309 or 314)

TOGETHER WITH THESE I ALSO SAW A CERTAIN BLESSED MAN who was in Alexandria, and whose name was Didymus, and who also, with us, wrote these things; now he was blind, and he could not see at all; he was a marvelous man, and I went several times to see him. He was eighty years of age, and he told me that he became blind when he was four years old and could not see at all, but according to what he himself related to me, "After forty years I perceived the faces (or external aspects) of things." Although this man had never learned the Testaments, and had never entered a school, the gift of excellent mind had been given to him by God. He became learned in the knowledge of books through an enlightened understanding. He was adorned with goodness and with the knowledge of the truth to such a degree, and was so ready and was so wholly wise that there was fulfill led in him that which was written, "The Lord opens the eyes of the blind." He could interpret the Old and New Testaments word by word in its proper place, and had investigated carefully the commandments and could repeat all the words which were in them. He was so thoroughly well acquainted with the belief of the truth, and he comprehended so deeply all heresies that his knowledge was more excellent than that of many who were before him in the Church.

Once when he was urging me to make a prayer in his cell and I was

unwilling to do so, he spoke to me and related to me concerning Abba Anthony who, he said, “Came three times and visited me in this cell. When I begged and entreated him to pray, straightaway he knelt down upon his knees, and prayed, and waited not for me to speak one word about it, but at the first word he corrected me by his obedience. He did not let me finish my speech, but by work he made manifest obedience.” Didymus said to me, “You also, if you wish to walk in his footsteps and to imitate him in his life and deeds, and in hospitality, and if you would walk in the life of excellence and in the love of God, remove yourself from contention.”

This blessed man Didymus himself told me the following story. Once upon a time I was suffering by reason of the wretched Emperor Julian. One day, when it was even tide, and I had eaten no food through my anxiety about this matter, whilst I was sitting on my seat I dropped into a light slumber, and there fell upon me a marvelous thing. I saw and behold, there were white horses galloping about, and they had on them riders who were dressed in white, and they were crying out and saying, “Tell Didymus that Julian died this day at the seventh hour. Rise up, eat, and make this news known to Bishop Athanasius, so that he also may know and rejoice.” I wrote down the day, and the hour, and the month in which this vision took place, and it was found that it had happened even as it had been told me in the vision.

The blessed man himself also told me the following story:

5. The History of the Maiden Alexandra

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAIDEN OF ALEXANDRIA whose name was Alexandra. She left the city and shut herself up in a tomb until the end of her life; she used to receive her food and whatever she needed through a window, and no man and no woman saw her face, neither did she see the face of any man, for twelve years. A few days afterwards she yielded up her soul. She lay down and went to her rest in peace. When her serving woman went to visit her according to her custom, she knocked at the window, but Alexandra gave her no answer, and straightaway she knew that she was dead, and she came and made known to us concerning her mistress. We took off the door of her cell and we found her body dried up.

The blessed woman Melania also related to us the story of Alexandra, saying, “I have never seen her face to face.” I stood outside the cell, close to the window, and entreated her to tell me for what reason she had shut herself up in the grave. Alexandra answered saying, “Inasmuch as the thought of the love of

God was present in my mind, I prayed before the Lord, and I entreated Him to permit me to offer to Him my virginity in the state in which it had been born with me. A certain young man regarded me in his thoughts, and looked upon me, and desired me, and sought to destroy me. But because I did not want to grieve him, or to say what was evil to him, or to be to him an occasion of sin, I chose rather to shut myself up alive in this grave than to cause a man who was made in the form of the image of God to stumble.”

I said to her, “How can you bear to live here without seeing the face of any man and without being driven to despair?” Then she said to me, “I occupy myself with my prayers and with the work of my hands. I have no idle moments. From morning until the ninth hour I weave linen, recite the Psalms and pray. During the rest of the day I commemorate in my heart the holy fathers. I revolve in my thoughts the histories of all the Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs. During the remaining hours I work with my hands and eat my bread, and by means of these things I am comforted whilst I await the end of my life in good hope.” These things we have heard from the blessed woman Melania who told the story of the maiden Alexandra. But in this history I must not underrate those who have toiled in the faith of Christ, to the glory of the perfect and to the admonition of those who hear.

6. The History of Abba Macarius the Alexandrian and a Certain Virgin

THERE WAS IN ALEXANDRIA A CERTAIN VIRGIN who though meek in appearance was of a haughty disposition. She was exceedingly rich and had possessions without number, but she never relieved the poor, and the strangers, and those who were in misery, and she never gave a drachma to the Church. Notwithstanding the frequent rebuke with which the Fathers rebuked her, she never allowed any portion of riches to leave her. This woman had kinsfolk, and she adopted her sister's daughter, to whom she used to promise by day and by night to give her all that she had, for she had fallen from heavenly love. It is a customary thing which belongs to the deception of Satan that he produces avarice under guise of love of family, for that he has no genuine care for kinsmanship is well known from the fact that he taught murder in order that he might make war between brethren, and is admitted by the Holy Book. If he imagined that he implants solicitude for kinsfolk in the hearts of men, it must be re-membered that he is not moved to do this on their behalf because of his love for them, but only that he may minister to his own will, for manifestly he knows the sentence of judgment which has been passed, that the

wicked shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

For if a man be moved by spiritual understanding and by divine desire, he will be able to care for his kinsfolk if they be in want without bringing himself into contempt; but if he devotes the whole of himself to the care for his kinsfolk, and he brings himself into contempt by making himself to labor under poverty, he will fall from the divine law. The divine man David sings in the Psalms concerning those who possess themselves of the solicitude of the fear of God, and he says, "Who shall go up into the mountain of the Lord?" Whenever he says, "Who," he makes known concerning the smallness of the number who shall go up. Again he says, "Who shall stand in His holy place? He whose hands are clean and whose heart is chosen, and does not give himself to poverty." For those who devote themselves to poverty are those who think that the soul is dissolved with this body.

This virgin, who was so in name only, became a stranger to the various kinds of spiritual excellence. And there was a certain priest whose name was Macarius (or Isidore) who wished to cut away as with iron and to lighten the weight of the possessions of those who loved money, and he had the care of, and was the governor of a house for the poor who were sick and infirm in their bodies. This man thought out the following plan whereby he might entrap the virgin. From his youth up he had been a skilful workman in the cutting of gems, and he went to her and said, "Certain very precious emeralds and gems have fallen into my hands, and whether they have been stolen or not I do not know; their value cannot be ascertained, because they are above price, but the man who has them will sell them for five hundred dinars. If you wish to take them you will be able to recover the price of five hundred dinars from the, sale of one of the gems, and the rest you will be able to employ in the adornment of your sisters daughter." When the virgin heard this she was perturbed, and fell down at his feet making entreaty to him, and said, "I beseech you to let no other person take them." Macarius says to her, "Come to my house and see them," but she would not consent to this; and she poured out for him five hundred dinars, and said to him, "According to what you do require even so take, but I do not wish to see the man who is selling them."

Having taken the five hundred dinars he spent them on food and on things for the use of those who were hungry, and on the poor. When much time had passed, inasmuch as he was a famous man in Alexandria, this blessed man was well known for his love of God, and for the merciful disposition which was in him, and he was almost one hundred years old, and we also knew him and had tarried in his house with him, the virgin was ashamed to call the matter of the five hundred dinars to his mind. But finally she found him in the church

and said to him, "I beseech you to tell me how you have disposed of the gems for which we gave you the five hundred dinars." He answered and said to her, "When you gave me the money I gave it for the price of the gems; if you wish come and see them in my house, for there they are deposited. Come and see them, if it pleases you so to do, and if you will not then take your money." So she went with him joyfully. The place to which she went was a house of the poor; in the upper parts of it were lying women whose bodies were destroyed, and in the lower parts were men. When they had come there Macarius brought her in through the door, and said to her, "Which would you see first, the emeralds or the gems?" She says to him, "Whichever you please." Then he took her up to the upper parts of the house and showed her the women whose faces and bodies were diseased and deformed, and said to her, "These are the gems;" and he brought her down to the lower parts, and showed her the men, saying, "These are the emeralds. If these please you good and well; but if not take your money." Then was the virgin ashamed, and went out and departed. By reason of her grief she fell into a sickness, because it was through God and of her own will that she had in this wise performed the matter. Finally, however, she came to herself, and was exceedingly grateful to the priest, and as for the maiden for whose wedding feast she was laying up her riches, she died.

7. Concerning the Monks who Lived in Nitria

HAVING HELD CONVERSE WITH MANY OF THE SAINTS, and having gone round about among the monasteries which were near to Alexandria for three years, and having met about two thousands of the great and strenuous men who lived there, and who were adorned with the excellence of spiritual lives, I departed from there and came to Mount Nitria. Between this mountain and Alexandria there lies a certain lake which is called "Mareotis," which embraces a space of seventy miles. Having seated myself in a boat I crossed this lake in a day and a half, and I came to the mountain to the south, which is joined to the desert which reaches to Cush (Ethiopia). In this mountain of the Mazaki and of the Mauritanians there live excellent men who are adorned with diverse kinds of ascetic virtues. Every monk leads the ascetic life as he wishes and as he is able, either by himself or in a community. In this mountain there are seven bakers who make bread and who minister to them, and to the chosen men of the inner desert, of whom there are six hundred, and also to the people of that mountain. When I had dwelt in this mountain for a year, and had profited by the fathers, the pious and blessed men, I mean Rabbi Brasses i.e. Arsisius,

Busiris, Peta-Bast, Agios, Khronis, and Serapion, the elder, and had learned from them also concerning the ancient and first spiritual fathers who had lived there, I entered into the inner desert in which is Mount Nitria.

In this mountain is a great church, and in the courtyard of it are three palm trees, in each of which hangs a whip. One of these is for the correcting of the monks who transgress through folly; the second is for the punishing of the thieves if they are found falling on the place; and the third is for the chastising of the strangers who flock there and who transgress in any matter whatsoever. It is the same with anyone who shall commit any offence, they bring him to the palm tree and punish him, and he receives upon his back the number of stripes which they have appointed to him. Adjoining the church is a house in which the strangers who arrive there may lodge, and if any man wishes to work there one year, or two, or until he departs of his own accord he may do so; and every week of days they permit him to rest, so that he may do nothing, but they give him work during the remaining days of the week, either among the bakers, or in the refectory. If there was among these anyone who was sufficiently educated they used to give him a book to read, but they did not allow him to hold converse with any man until the sixth hour. There were also in this mountain physicians for the use of the sick, and those who sold cakes; and they also used wine which was sold there. All these people worked at the weaving of flax with their hands, and there was no needy man there. Now when the evening comes you must rise up to hear the praises, and the Psalms, and the prayers which are sent up to Christ by the people from the monasteries which are there, and a man might imagine, his mind being exalted, that he was in the Paradise of Eden.

The monks only came to church on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the week. Belonging to this church there were eight priests and governors, but as long as the first one lived none of the other ministers in the church; he neither judged nor spoke with any man, and lived with him a life of silent contemplation. This great man Arsisius and many of the ancient holy men whom we saw were followers of the rule of the blessed man Anthony, and Arsisius himself told me that the holy man Ammon, who was from Nitria, and whom he knew, and whose soul was taken up and carried by the angels into heaven, even saw Anthony. And Arsisius also spoke to me concerning the blessed man Pachomius, who came from Tabenna of Hekham, and who possessed the gift of prophecy and who became the governor and head of three thousands men, of this man I will relate the virtues at the end of this book.

8. *The History of Abba Ammon*

CONCERNING THE BLESSED MAN AMMON, he used to say that he became a monk in this way: When he was a young man, about twenty-two years old, he was left as an orphan by his parents. His father's brother wanted to give him a wife, and because he was unable to resist the counsel of his uncle he was compelled by force to marry one, and to fasten the crown of bridegrooms upon his head, and to take his seat in the marriage chamber, and to fulfill everything according to the law of the marriage feast. Ammon submitted to everything outwardly, but after every one had gone forth having put Ammon and his wife to bed in the marriage chamber, the blessed man rose up and shut the door and seated himself. He called to the true and blessed woman his spouse, and said to her, "Henceforth you shall be my lady and my sister; come therefore, and I will relate to you concerning a matter which is more excellent than marriage. The marriage which men contract is a perishable thing, but let us choose for ourselves the marriage which does not perish, and the marriage feast which never ends. Let us each sleep alone, for in this wise we shall please Christ; and let us guard the glory of our virginity unspotted, so that we may take our rest at the marriage feast which is incorruptible."

Then he took out a book from his bosom and read to the maiden passages, which were uttered by the Apostles and by our Redeemer, and since she had no knowledge of the Scriptures he added to their words from his own divine mind. He read many passages to her and talked much to her concerning virginity and purity, and at length, by the grace of Christ, she was persuaded. Then she answered and said to him, "Master, I know well that a rule of life of purity is very much more excellent than marriage; therefore whatever pleases you, that do. I also from this time forth will be persuaded to do whatever you wish to do."

Ammon said to her, "I beg and entreat you to let each of us from this time forth dwell alone." She would not agree to this, and said, "Let us live in the same house, and let each of us have a separate bed." So they dwelt together holily in the same house for eighteen years. In the morning Ammon used to go out and pass the whole day in cultivating the balsam trees which he had in his garden. The balsam tree is like to the vine, and must be planted and pruned and cultivated, and it demands great attention and in the evening he entered into his house, and recited his prayers, and then ate with her. He also rose up to say the praises of the night, and as soon as the dawn had come he would depart to the garden. As they were doing these things they both removed themselves from passions, and attained to impassibility, and the prayers of Abba Ammon

helped his wife.

At length the blessed woman said to him, "Master, I have something to say to you, if you will hearken to me, and I am convinced that for God's sake you love me." The blessed man said to her, "Tell me what you wish to say?" And she said to him, "It is not right seeing that you are a God-fearing man, and one who lives a life of righteousness, and that you have also made me, outwardly, to yearn for this path of life, and by the help of divine grace I have gotten purity, to live with me. It is not good that, for my sake, you who dwell with me in purity for our Lord's sake, should hide the spiritual excellence of your philosophy; for it is not seemly that your fair deeds should be hidden, and should not be known. Let your dwelling be apart from me and thus you shall benefit many." Then Ammon praised God, and said to her, "O lady, this mind is beautiful, and if it be acceptable to you do you remain and abide in this house in peace, and I will go and make another for myself." Having gone out from her Ammon departed and entered into Mount Nitria, where as yet the monasteries were not numerous, indeed up to that time there were no monasteries at all there, and built himself a habitation there, and dwelt there for twenty two years. Having attained to the highest practice of the labors of the ascetic life he ended his days, that is to say, the holy man Ammon went to his rest and slept when he was sixty two years of age. Twice in these years he went to see his spouse. He died in his virginity, and his wife likewise, brought the years of her life to an end in purity.

The following wonderful thing is told concerning him by the blessed Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, in the book, which he, Bishop Athanasius, composed about the life and deeds of the blessed Anthony. Once when he was about to cross the river which is called "the Wolf" with Theodore his disciple, he was ashamed to take off his clothes lest he might see the nakedness of his person. Being doubtful in his mind how he should cross over, wonder fell upon him, and through an angel he crossed the river without any boat whatsoever on his part. It was the same Ammon who saw the blessed man Anthony, who lived and died in such wise that his soul was taken to heaven by angels, and it was he who passed over the waters by the might of the Holy Spirit. As concerning this river, which is called "the Wolf," I myself was once in great fear when I was crossing it in a boat, because it is filled with the overflow of the waters of the Nile.

9. *The History of the Blessed Man Hor*

IN MOUNT NITRIA THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN whose name was Hor, concerning whom men, especially all the brotherhood, testify to many of his triumphs, and also that marvelous and excellent woman Melha (i.e. Melania), the handmaid of Christ, who went into this mountain before I did. As for me, I never became acquainted with this man. In his history they say this one thing: "He never told a lie in his life, and he never used oaths; he never uttered a curse, and beyond what was absolutely necessary he never spoke at all."

10. *The History of the Blessed Man Pambo (d. A.D. 393)*

IN THIS MOUNTAIN THERE ALSO LIVED THE BLESSED MAN Pambo (or Panbis), who was the teacher and master of the Bishops Dioscorus, Ammonius, Eusebius, Euthemis (Eutymius), and Origen the nephew of Dracontius, a marvelous man. This man Pambo possessed the power to utter words of prophecy, and splendid triumphs, yet with all these he despised gold and silver, even as the Word demands. The following things concerning him were related to me by the blessed woman Melha (i.e. Melania).

When I first came from Rome to Alexandria I heard concerning the life and deeds of Pambo, inasmuch as the blessed man Isidore, who also brought me to him in the desert, told me about him. I brought to him a basket, which was filled with stamped silver (i.e. coined money) three hundred pounds in weight, and I begged him to accept some of my possessions for his needs. He was sitting and plaiting the leaves of palm trees, and as he was doing this he merely blessed me, and said, "God gives you your reward!" Then he said to his steward, whose name was Origen, "Take and distribute this among all the brethren who are in the Island and in Libya"; for these monasteries are exceedingly poor, and he commanded the steward not to give to any man who dwelt in Egypt, for those who dwell there have abundant means of subsistence. I stood there and I expected to be treated with honor or to be praised for the greatness of the gift, but when I heard nothing from him, I said to him, "Master, do you know how much money it is, and that there are three hundred pounds in the basket?" Then Pambo, without lifting up his gaze, said to me, "My daughter, He to whom you have offered your money has no need to know the weight. For He who weighed the mountains in a balance knows how much is the weight of your silver. If you had given the money to me you would have done well to have informed me concerning the weight of it; but since you have

given it to God, Who did not despise the two mites of the widow, what need have you to tell Him? Hold your peace.”

Our Lord so directed that in the day on which I entered the mountain this blessed man died without having been ill, for he died whilst he was sewing together palm leaves for mats, without fever and without sickness. And he was seventy years old. He was sewing together palm leaves for a mat, and coming to the end of it he sent and called me.

When he had finished sewing it, he said to me, “Take this mat from my hands, so that you may keep me in remembrance, for I have nothing else whatever to leave you.” Having given it to me he straightaway died. I wrapped his body in linen swathings, and buried him. Then I departed from the desert; and I shall treasure the mat as a sacred relic until the day of my death.

At the time of the death of this holy man Pambo there were standing before him certain famous men, Origen the priest and steward, and Ammonius, together with the remainder of the brethren, and they told me that at the time of his death, he said, “From the day in which I came into this desert and built this cell in which I have lived until this day I know not that I have ever eaten the bread of idleness which did not come from the labor of my own hands; and my soul repents not that I have ever spoken an empty word in my life; thus I go to God like one who has, as yet, not made a beginning in the fear of God.”

Origen and Ammonius, the servants of Christ, in telling us the story of his life, bore witness concerning him that he was never asked a question by any man about a saying from the Book, or about the rules and labors of the ascetic life which he did not either answer immediately, or say, “I have not as yet understood the matter.”

Now there were times when he spoke these words only after three months consideration of a matter; and he used to make answer with such understanding that every man received the things, which were said by him with as great reverence as if they had been said by God.” This excellence was also attributed to Anthony the Great and to the rest of the holy men. Among other things which are said concerning the holy man Pambo is the following. The blessed man once went to Pambo’s cell and took with him some bread, and Pambo made a complaint, saying to him, “Why have you done this?” Then Abba Pior made answer, saying, “Let this thing be not grievous to you.” But Pambo was silent and sent him away. After some time Abba Pambo went to the cell of Abba Pior, and took with him bread which had been dipped in water; and being asked, “Why have you done this?” The blessed man Pambo said to him, “Let it not be grievous to you that I have also dipped the bread

in water.”

11. The History of the Blessed Ammonius

THIS MAN AMMONIUS AND HIS THREE BROTHERS i.e. Dioscorus, Eusebius, and Euthinemius, who were called the “Tall Brothers” by Sozomen, and his two sisters, were disciples of Abba Pambo. When they had attained to the perfection of divine life and conversation they departed from the desert, and founded two monasteries, I mean, one for men and one for women, but they placed the monastery of the women at a sufficient distance from that of the men, for Ammonius did not greatly love the intercourse of speech. It was for this reason that a certain city desired that he should be its bishop, and the people of it drew near to the blessed man Timothy, Bishop of Alexandria, and entreated him to make the blessed Ammonius their bishop. And Timothy who from 381-385 was the Bishop of Alexandria told them to bring Ammonius to him and that he would make him their bishop. Then they took with them much people, and they went to Ammonius to bring him, and when he saw them he tried to find means to take to flight. But when he saw that he was unable to escape from them, he tried to persuade them, with many oaths that he would not accept it, but he was unable to make them give up their intention. When they would not be persuaded by him, he seized a razor and cut off his left ear at the root, and said to them, “Now I am indeed persuaded that I cannot be that which you are urging me to be, for the Law also commands, the man whose ear has been cut off shall not draw near to the altar.” So they left him and went and informed the Bishop, who said to them, “This law is observed among the Jews, but even if his nose was split and he had fine qualities I would make him Bishop.” Then the people went to Ammonius again and entreated him to come, and when the pious man would not be persuaded by them, they wanted to take him and to make him come by force; but he said to them, “If you do not leave me I will also slit my tongue.” When they heard this they left him and departed.

Concerning this man Ammonius so wonderful a thing as the following is said. Whenever a carnal thought entered his mind he never spared his body, but he would make a piece of iron hot on the fire and lay it upon his members, so that they might always be in a state of wounds. From his youth up his rule was as follows: whatsoever had been cooked by fire he would never eat. He could repeat the books of the Old and New Testaments by heart, and he used to read also the books which were composed by excellent men, by Origen, by

Didymus, by Pierius, and by Stephen containing about ten thousands and six hundreds sayings; concerning this the great fathers who lived in the desert bear witness. It is also said that this man possessed the power of foretelling events, and living in his cell he was so great a comforter to the brethren who lived in the desert that no other man could be compared with him. The blessed Evagrius, who was clothed with the spirit, and was skilled in examining thoughts, used to say, "I never saw any man who had attained more closely to impassibility than Ammonius."

Once a certain need of those who were dwelling in the desert called the blessed Ammonius, and Rufinus who was at that time the prefect also greatly persuaded him, and he went up to Constantinople. With him there were also the holy bishops, and other monks who had come from various provinces to be present at the service of restoration of a certain martyrion which Rufinus had built. Rufinus wished him to receive him after holy baptism at the service of restoration of the temple which he had built, and so the blessed man received him from the bishops who had baptized him. Thus, as was right, Rufinus paid to the blessed man Ammonius the honour which is due to a life of asceticism, and he used to listen to him in everything; and after a short time he died and was buried in the martyrion which is called the "martyrion of Rufinus" and many helpful acts took place at his grave on behalf of those who were worthy of help.

12. The History of the Blessed Benjamin

THERE WAS ALSO IN THE MOUNTAIN OF NITRIA a marvelous man whose name was Benjamin, who attained to a high state of perfection in the ascetic life, for he had fasted and toiled for eighty years. Now he was held to be worthy of the gift of the craft of the physician, and from every wound upon which he laid his hand, and which Christ blessed or gave him the power to heal, straightaway every pain departed. And this man, who was worthy of such a gift, collected water in his body for eight months before his death, and he was so much swollen that he might well have been called a second job. Dioscurus took us, that is to say, the blessed Origen and myself, and said to us, "Come and see a new Job, who whilst suffering from such a severe disease of the body as this heals others." Benjamin gave thanks concerning his affliction beyond measure, and glorified God continually. His soul rejoiced and was glad in the hope which it laid up for the saints.

When we had gone and seen the swelling of his body we found that it

had become so large that a man could not with all his hand encircle one of his fingers; and being unable to look upon such a terrible affliction through disease we turned away our eyes. Then the blessed man Benjamin said to us, "My sons, pray that the inner man may not collect water. Even when this body was in health it in no wise helped me, and now that it is sick it in no wise hinders me." During the last eight months of his illness they made a broad chair for him, and he used to sit on it always, because he was not able to lie down upon a bed by reason of the necessity of his belly and of the other members of his body. Whilst he himself lived in such suffering through all his afflictions he was healing others, and it is for this reason that I am compelled to narrate to you concerning the affliction of this righteous man, so that when such an affliction as this happens to the righteous we may not hold the matter to be hard. When this blessed man died, the whole of the framework of the doorway had to be removed to enable them to bring out his body from his cell, for his body was very large indeed.

13. The History of Apollonius the Merchant

A GAIN ANOTHER MAN, WHOSE NAME WAS APOLLONIUS, used to dwell in this Mount Nitria; and he was a merchant who had come there to learn to lead the life and conversation of an anchorite. This man found no handicraft at the exercise of which he could employ himself, and he could neither fast nor keep vigil like the other ascetics to any great extent. During the twenty years which he lived in this mountain it was his rule of life and triumph that by his own labor and toil he used to buy from Alexandria everything which was required by the brethren, and the things which were needed for the healing of the sick, and carry them to the sick. And it was a marvelous thing to see him going about among the monasteries and cells of the brethren each day, from the earliest dawn, when he set out, until the ninth hour, and he used to stand by the door and say, "Is there, perhaps, anyone sick here?" He carried about pomegranates, and dried cakes, and raisins, and eggs, and the things, which are necessary for the sick. He found this rule of life easy to acquire, and to continue until his old age. He was able to attend to the affairs of the five thousands brethren who were dwelling in the mountain. When he died he left whatever he had to another man like to himself. He begged him to carry out this ministration, because the place where the monks lived, was a desert and was destitute of the things of the world.

14. The Histories of the Natural Brethren Paesius and Isaiah

THERE WERE ALSO THERE TWO BRETHREN, whose names were Paesius and Isaiah, who were the sons of a certain merchant who traded in Spain; and when their father died they divided his inheritance between them, and there came to each of them money which amounted to five thousands dinars, and furniture, and raiment, and slaves, and property of all kinds. These blessed men took counsel together and meditated together and said to each other, "By what manner of trafficking shall we live in this world? If we continue to exercise the trade of our father, we shall only double our labors and toil for the benefit of others; and perhaps our wealth will fall into the hands of thieves by land or of pirates by sea." Whilst they were being troubled by such thoughts as these they answered and said to each other, "Let us come to the way of truth, and let us acquire the life and conversation of the Christians, whereby we shall both keep the benefit of what our father bath left us, and get possession of our soul."

This proposition concerning the labor of the dwellers in the monasteries was pleasing to them, and each of them found in his discipleship the power to judge as to what work he should embrace. Having divided their fathers' inheritance they both possessed the eager care to please God by the various kinds of labors of life of the mourner. One of them divided everything, which had come to him and gave it to the churches and monastic habitations, and distributed it among the poor and needy; and he learned a handicraft at which he could work and earn his daily bread, and he was constant in prayer and fasting. The other brother did not distribute his possessions, but he built himself a monastery and gathered together to him a few brethren and providing therefore became a care to him. All strangers and poor folk, and all the aged men and sick folk who thronged to him he used to receive and relieve their wants. Every first day of the week, and every Sabbath, he used to prepare three tables and relieve the wants of everyone who happened to be present there; and thus he spent all his possessions.

When the two brothers died abundant blessing was ascribed to them by the whole brotherhood, but the one brother pleased some of them most, and the other the others; and although the brethren praised both brothers, a dispute arose among them concerning the superior merit of one or the other of the two brothers. Then the brethren went to the blessed Pambo and related the matter to him, and wished to learn which rule of life and labor was the greater and more excellent. Pambo said to them, "They are both perfect. One man made

manifest the work of Abraham by his hospitality, and the other the self-denial of Elijah." Again the brethren said to him, "How is it possible for the two to be equal in merit? We praise and magnify him whom braced poverty, for we find that he did the work of the Gospel in selling everything that he had and giving it to the poor, and that every day, and at every season, both by day and by night, he took up his cross and followed after his Lord by his fasting and his prayers." Again the other brethren contended with them, saying, "The other brother showed such supreme compassion on those who were strangers and on those who were afflicted that he would even sit in the highways and gather together the passersby who were in trouble; and not only did he relieve his own soul, but he also brought a lightening to many souls that were heavy laden, and he would make ready the dead for the grave and bury them."

The blessed Pambo said to them, "Again I say to you that both are equal in merit, and I will tell you how each of them became so. Unless the one had fasted he would not have been worthy of the goodness and compassion of the other, and again, the other in relieving the wants of strangers also lightened his own load, for although a man may think that he has trouble in receiving them yet he also gains rest of body. But stay here a few days so that I may learn the answer from God, and come back and I will declare it to you." After a few days they came to him, and they asked him to tell them what had been revealed to him and he answered and said to them, "I have seen them both standing in the Paradise of Eden, as it were in the presence of God."

15. The History of Macarius, The Child of His Cross

THERE WAS ALSO A CERTAIN YOUTH WHOSE NAME WAS MACARIUS. When he became a young man about eighteen years old, he used to pasture flocks and herds, along with other young men of his own age and position, by the side of the lake which is called Mareotis. And without wishing to do so he unwittingly committed a murder; and without saying a word to any man he straightaway rose up and departed, and he went out and journeyed into the desert. Thus he attained to the fear of God, and to the love of men, in such wise that he esteemed himself lightly; and he passed three years in the desert, in the open air, and without a roof over his head. In that country no rain fall, and this everyone knows either from hearsay or from actual experience.

After three years he built himself a cell, and dwelt in it for five and twenty years and performed great labors. He was held worthy of the divine gift of being able to treat with contempt the devils, and he was completely happy in

the ascetic life and in the noble labors of it. I dwelt by this man for no short time, and once I asked him, "What is your thought about the sinfulness of that murder which you did commit?" He said to me, "I am entirely untroubled by it, for I am bound to confess that the sin of this involuntary murder was the good cause of the redemption of my life, and the testimony of the Book confirms this view, saying not even Moses, the servant of the Lord, would have been held worthy of the divine vision unless, through fear for the murder which he had committed, he had forsaken Egypt, come to Mount Sinai, where he was held to be worthy of converse with God, and to compose the commandments of the spirit. We speak these things, not because we wish to help murder, but only in order that we may particularly show that spiritual excellences spring from tribulations, when a man is not of his own will persuaded to draw near to goodness. Some spiritual excellences arise from the will, and some from tribulation; and in the works which I have found appended to this history I have discovered that the murder which Macarius committed belonged to this latter class.

Macarius prayed always, and he prayed with his arms and hands extended in the form of a cross. And when he had drawn near to the end of his course, which was not caused by illness, at that time I say he stood up in the corner of his cell, and extended his hands and arms in prayer, and thus praying he yielded up his spirit. When he who used to bring him food came and saw him standing by the side of the wall with his hands stretched out, he remained standing outside thinking that Macarius was standing up in prayer, as was his custom. Having waited for about three hours, he opened the door, went in, and said to him, "Bless, master!" When he did not answer him he drew near and shook him. When he saw that he was dead he came, and told us. Having come we saw him standing in the form of a cross, and we marveled. When we had laid him out upon the ground we were unable to bring his hands near to his body, and so we dug his grave in the form of a cross and laid him in it. I was sorely grieved because of his departure, fell into a slumber and slept. A voice came to me, saying, "Inasmuch as during his lifetime he loved the cross, which he bore through his good works, in it also he shall have his rest; in the form of that which he desired longingly has he been buried, and in the same form shall he stand up at the right hand on the day of Christ." Having heard these things I awoke, and I glorified God and the power of the Cross.

16. The History of the Blessed Nathaniel (d. about 376 A.D.)

THERE WAS ALSO ANOTHER MAN AMONG THE AGED ONES whose name was Nathaniel. I never met him in his life, for he died fifteen years before I entered into this mountain. But I have met those who dwelt with him for a long time. Having made enquiries of these I learned concerning the triumphs of the man, and they showed me his cell in which at that time no man was living, because it was near to the world. Abba Nathaniel built it long ago when the monks were few in number.

They used to relate concerning this man that his patient endurance in his cell was such that he never moved from his place to go outside the door of his habitation for the disposition of his will. At the beginning he was laughed at by the evil, who mocks at and leads astray every man. The evil made Nathaniel to feel weariness in his first cell, so he went and built himself another cell in the neighbourhood of the city. After he had built the other cell and had dwelt in it, some three or four months later the devil waged war against him once more. The evil came by night holding in his hand a sling like a hunter, and was dressed in the garb of the Romans, and he was slinging stones with the sling, which he was holding. Then the blessed man Nathaniel said to him, "Who are you? Who does these things in the place where I dwell?" The devil said to him, "I am he who made you to flee from your first cell, and I have come that I may make you to flee from this place." When he knew that the devil was laughing at him because he had departed from his first cell, straightaway he turned and went back to it, and he lived in his first cell for the space of thirty and seven years in such strict abnegation that he never passed outside the door, and meanwhile he was warring with the devil.

The wicked devil made him experience so many afflictions and troubles in order to drive him out of his cell that it would be impossible for any man to recount them. The evil watched and obtained his opportunity in the arrival of the Bishops who came to Nathaniel (now they were all holy men), and whether the ordering of the matter was due to the will of God, or to the temptation of the evil, we do not know, but he made Nathaniel to fall away somewhat from his intention.

When the Bishops had prayed and had gone forth, Nathaniel did not escort them the distance of one step, and the servants who were with them said to him, "Do you possess the faculty of pride that you will not accompany the bishops?" Nathaniel said to them, "I died once and for all to my lords the Bishops, and to the whole world. I have a secret matter concerning which it is God only who knows my heart, and why I did not go to escort the bishops."

Then that devil, who was still making a mock of this self abnegation, nine months before Nathaniel's death took upon himself the form of a young man who was about twenty years old, and he was following after an ass which was carrying bread in the bed of the river. When it was far into the evening the young man passed close to the cell, he pretended that the ass had fallen down under its burden, and he began to cry out, saying, "Abba Nathaniel, help me, come and render me assistance." Nathaniel heard the voice of the young man who he thought was crying out, and opened the door. As he was standing inside, he spoke with him, and said, "Who are you? What do you want me to do for you?" The young man replied, "I am such and such, and I am carrying bread to such and such a brother because he wishes to make a love feast, and the day which dawns tomorrow will be the Sabbath, and bread for the Offering will be necessary. I beg you, not to tarry in assisting me, lest the hyenas come and devour both me and the ass." There were many hyenas in that place.

Then the blessed Nathaniel stood still in great astonishment, and was much troubled in his mind by the mercy which had revealed itself to him. He meditated within himself, saying, "It is either through the command of God that I must fall, or through my will having reached its limit." Finally he meditated within himself and said, "It is better for him who has guarded for all these years the limit of his will, and has not passed over his door, to remain in the same condition which will put the evil to shame than to go out." He prayed to God. Then he made answer to him whom he believed to be a young man crying out, and said to him, "Young man, hear me! I believe that God Whom I serve will send you help if you need it, and that neither the hyenas nor anything else will harm you. But if you are a temptation may God discover your craftiness!" He shut the door and held his peace. That devil was put to shame, and by reason of his wickedness he took the form of a whirlwind and the forms of wild asses which dance about and skip and break wind. This is the story of the triumph of the blessed Nathaniel, and this is the story of his labor and of his ending.

17. The History of Macarii

CONCERNING THE HOLY AND IMMORTAL FATHERS, that is to say Macarius the Egyptian, and Macarius the Alexandrian, who were men to be feared and who were invincible athletes, and concerning the strife of their life and deeds, and conversation, it is exceedingly right and good that we should tell the story. Perhaps it will not be accepted by the unbelievers, and therefore I

find it difficult to relate their history, and to set it down completely in writing, lest by so doing I should be accounted a liar; and that the Lord destroys those who speak falsehood the Holy Spirit makes clearly manifest. As I myself do not put to the lie the help of Christ, do not you, O Lausus, you believer in men, become an unbeliever in the triumphs of the holy fathers which are spoken of, but adorn yourself more and more with the deeds and conversation of these glorious men who were in very truth, even as they are called, blessed men.

The athlete of Christ, the first Macarius, was by race an Egyptian, and the second Macarius, although he was second to him in the matter of age, was nevertheless first in the opinion of the monks; and this man, whose name also was Macarius, which is interpreted blessed, was from the city of Alexandria, and he was one of those who sold dried fruit and wine.

In another manuscript I have found a different version of the history of the two Macarii which I have used in the preparation of this history, and I set this down here also; now it reads as follows:

As concerning the two blessed men whose names were the same, inasmuch as their rule of life and conversation were of an exceedingly exalted character, perhaps many will not believe what I write. I, however, am afraid lest I may understate and belittle their triumphs in any way whatsoever, and lie concerning them, for it is written, "You will destroy those who speak falsehood." The Holy Spirit has passed this sentence upon me, therefore, O beloved and faithful men, believe me. One of these two blessed men was an Egyptian by race, and the other was an Alexandrian who sold dried fruits. First of all I will tell the story of the ascetic excellences of Macarius the Egyptian, the whole of whose years were ninety; he was thirty years old when he went up to the desert, and he lived in it for sixty years. He was given the gift of performing mighty deeds in such a remarkable manner that he was called by the fathers the aged youth, because straightaway and quickly he ascended to the highest grade of ascetic excellence and gifts, and to the power of interpreting the Scriptures, and to spiritual foresight. The gift of possessing power over devils was also given to him, and he was also esteemed worthy of the priesthood. With this blessed man there lived in the further or inner desert, which is called "Scete", two disciples; one of these was his servant, for many folk were accustomed to come to him to be healed, and the other remained always in a cell which was near to Macarius. When much time had passed by, Macarius looked and said to him that ministered to him (now his name was John, and he afterwards became the elder in the place of the blessed man), he answered, I say, and said to him, "Hear me, O John, and receive the rebuke with which I rebuke you. For you are suffering temptation, and behold the spirit of the love of money (i.e.

avarice) tempts you, for even so have I seen. I know that if you will listen to me your end in this place shall be praised, and no harm shall draw near to your habitation. But if you will not hearken to me, because of the love of money, which moves you, the leprosy of Gehazi shall come upon you at the end. It came to pass some fifteen or twenty years after the death of the blessed man, John forgot his commandment, and because he used to steal from the poor, his body became so covered with leprosy that there was not in the whole of it one sound spot large enough for a man to lay his finger upon. Thus the prophecy of the blessed Macarius concerning John actually came to pass.

If we were to attempt to describe the food and drink of the holy man, we should do what is superfluous, because among the thoughtless monks who lived in that place there was not to be found any one thing which could lead to excess either in eating or drinking; first because of the poverty of the spot, and secondly because of the divine zeal which they display towards each other. But I may mention his sad and stern habits of self-denial in various other ways. And they relate concerning him that he was at all times in a state of wonder at some divine vision, and that he used to become like a drunken man by reason of some hidden vision, and that his mind was more often exalted to God than it was concerned with the things which are in this world, and those which are under the heavens. And, as concerning the wonderful things which God wrought by his hands, it is not seemly that we should keep silence, and of him the following marvelous things are told.

A certain Egyptian loved another man's wife, but since he was not able to incite her to love him and to make her yield to his will, he spoke to a certain magician, saying, "Make this woman to love me, or employ your sorcery in some way so that her husband may hate her, and cast her out." When the magician had received money not a little, he made use of his sorceries, and he made the woman to appear in the form of a mare; and when her husband went into his house from outside, and saw her, astonishment seized him at the sight of a mare lying upon his bed. Then he lifted up his voice in a sorrowful cry, and he wept tears, and heaved sighs; and he spoke with her, but she made no reply to him, and she did not answer him a word. Having seen what had taken place, he went to the elder of the village (i.e. the Sheikh Al-Balad), and told him concerning this matter, and brought him and took him in and showed him what had happened. For a space of three days he did not know what the matter was, for the mare neither ate dried grass like an animal, nor did she partake of bread like a daughter of man; and she did without food of either kind. Finally, however, in order that God might be glorified, and a miracle might also be made manifest at the hands of the blessed Macarius, and his spiritual

perfection be made known, it entered into the mind of the man who was the woman's husband to take her to the desert to the blessed Macarius. And having saddled her like a mare, and thrown over her a halter, like an animal, he led her away and departed to the desert.

When the man arrived at the cell of the blessed Macarius, the brethren who were standing by the side of the cell of the blessed Macarius saw him, and they wanted to keep back the husband of the woman, and strove with him, saying, "Why have you brought this mare into the desert?" The man said to them, "That she may receive mercy, and be healed." They said to him, "What ails her?" He answered and said to them, "She is a woman who has been suddenly transformed into a mare, and behold, she has eaten no food for three days." Then the brethren went and told the blessed O Macarius what the matter was, and when they came to inform him they found him standing inside his cell and praying for her, for God had already revealed this matter to him, and he was praying for the woman. The holy man Macarius answered and said to his disciples: "You are mares which have the eyes of horses; but that mare is a woman. She has not been changed from her nature of a woman except in the sight to those who have made a mistake; and that she appears as a mare is only an error of the sight of those who see her." Then the blessed man took water and blessed it, and he threw it over her head and it ran down all over her body; and the blessed man prayed and straightaway he made her to appear in the form of a woman to every man. Then he gave her some sacramental bread and made her to eat it before every man, and then he sent her away healed with her husband; and they departed from him rejoicing and praising God. The blessed man exhorted the woman, and said to her, "Be not at any time remote from the Church, and deprive not yourself of the Holy Mysteries, for all these things have happened to you because for five weeks you did not partake of the Offering."

Let us now speak about his other excellences, and of his stern habits of self-denial in other particulars. Because the large numbers of people who came to be blessed by him gave him much trouble, he thought out the following plan in his mind. He dug out a trench in his cell, which was about twenty measures in width, and he made from it a tunnel of considerable length, and it extended from his cell to the distance of half a mile; at the place where the passage came to an end he made above the end of it a small cave. When large numbers of people came to him and troubled him, he used to leave his cell secretly and pass along hidden by the tunnel and hide himself in the cave, where no one could find him. He used to do this whenever he wished to escape from the vain praise of the children of men. And one of his most strenuous

disciples told us, saying, "As he was going from his cell to the cave he used to recite four and twenty antiphons, and as he was coming back four and twenty also; and whenever he went from his cell to the church he used to pray four and twenty prayers during his passage, and four and twenty as he was coming back." Moreover, they say that he gave life to a dead man in order that he might convert a certain heathen who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and this was spoken of throughout the desert.

Once a certain unmarried man who was vexed by an evil devil was brought to Macarius, being carefully fettered by two other men, and his mother had caused him to be brought to him. The devil used to act upon him in the following manner. After he had eaten three baskets of bread and drunk three bottles of water he used to vomit, and scatter the bread and water in the air in the form of smoky vapour, and in this wise his food and his drink were consumed in waste, even as anything which is cast into the fire is consumed. Now there are certain kinds of devils, which are called "fiery," for there are varieties among devils even as there are among men, in disposition if not in nature. And inasmuch as his mother had not that with which to satisfy him, he used to eat his own offal and drink his own water; and his mother begged the blessed man with tears on behalf of her son, and Macarius took him and prayed over him, and entreated God on his behalf. And a day or two after he had healed him of his trial, the blessed man cried to the mother of the young man, and said to her, "How much have you need of for the food of one day for him?" She said to him, "Ten pounds of bread." Then he rebuked her and said, "You have said too much." After seven days Macarius made the young man so that he needed to eat three pounds only, which was sufficient for him to work upon and live. Now this miracle God wrought by the hand of the blessed Macarius, whose soul now sojourns with the angels. I never saw this man, for he died one year before I entered the desert.

18. The History of Macarius the Alexandrian

AS FOR THE OTHER MACARIUS, THE ALEXANDRIAN, I did see him, for he was an elder in the place which is called the "Cells" in which I myself lived for nine years, and he lived for three years after I entered in it; some of his wonderful acts I myself have seen, and some of them I have learned from others, and of others I have also heard rumours.

His stern life of self-denial was as follows: Whenever he heard of any beautiful deed being done by any man, he must straightaway carry it into

practice in a fuller form. He once heard from a certain man that all the brethren of Tabenna never tasted any food whatsoever which had been cooked by fire during the whole of the Forty Days Fast, and he straightaway determined within himself that for seven years he would not eat any food which had been cooked by fire, and that he would not partake of anything except young wild herbs, and vegetables which had been made soft by soaking in water, or similar things. When he had completed this rule of life he heard of a monk in a certain monastery who only ate one pound of bread each day, and he straightaway broke his bread into pieces and cast it into a vessel with a narrow mouth, and he determined within himself that he would eat nothing that his hand could not draw up out of the vessel the first time he put it in. Time after time, he used to tell the story with a smile, and say, "When I put my hand down I could fill it readily, but I could not draw it up full because the mouth of the vessel was too narrow, and it would not let me take it out full." He lived this hard life for three years, and ate daily only four or five ounces of bread; and of water also he only drank sufficient to enable him to eat his bread. Of oil he took only one flask each year, making use of it only on the great First Day of the Resurrection, and on the great day of Pentecost, and at the Nativity, and at the Epiphany, and when he received the Mysteries during the Forty Days Fast.

I will tell also of the various other practices of his hard life. He determined once to vanquish sleep, and it is related that he never entered under a roof for twenty days, and that he was burnt up by the exceedingly great heat of the sun at noonday during all this time, and that during the nights he was without rest. He himself told us, "Had I not quickly gone in under a roof and slept, and rested myself the brains in my head would have dried up, and I should become like a drunk man." But, he would say, "I have been conquered against my will, for although the nature of the body has been overcome I have given it what it needs."

Again, once when he was sitting in his cell a gnat bit him in the leg and he suffered pain, and he crushed the gnat in his hand and killed it. Then straightaway he despised himself because he had avenged himself upon the gnat, and he passed upon himself the sentence that he should go to the place, which is called "Scete," that is to say, the inner desert, and sit there naked for six months. For there were many great gnats (i.e. mosquitoes) there, and they were so savage that they could pierce the skins of pigs, and they resembled wasps; and his whole body was so eaten and swollen that a man would have thought that he had the hide of an elephant, and when he came back to his cell six months later they could only recognize from his voice that he was Macarius.

Again he desired greatly to go and see the garden of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, because, as he himself told us, they had obtained power, and riches and dominion, and had built there a tomb, and had established there great works in marble; now their tomb was ornamented with many things, and they had also placed there gold and things of a marvelous character, and trees and plants, for the place had been made into a garden, and they had also dug a well there. Because Macarius did not know the way, he observed the course of the stars, and travelled thereby; and thus he journeyed through the open desert as upon the sea. He took with him also a bundle of thin reeds, and at the end of each mile he used to drive a reed into the ground like a rock, so that he might be able to find the way when he had to come back. When he had journeyed for nine days, and had drawn near the place in which was the tomb, the evil, who always wages war against the athletes of the Lord, gathered together all the reeds which the blessed man Macarius had driven into the ground, and put them under his head for a pillow whilst he was asleep, when he was about one mile from the garden, and when the blessed man woke up he found the reeds. It is probable that God permitted this thing to happen for His own glory and for the triumph of His servant, so that Macarius might not put his confidence in reeds, but upon God, Who by means of a pillar of cloud led the children of Israel in the desert for forty years. Macarius told us, saying, "Seventy devils came forth against me from that garden, and they flew about before my face like ravens, and they were crying out and groaning, and saying, "What do you seek here, O Macarius? What do you seek, O monk? Why have you come here? You cannot stay here." I said to them, "I only want to go in and see the garden, and then I will depart. I entered in it, and I saw everything, and I found hanging over the well an iron chain with a brass bucket, but they were rusted through age; and the pomegranates which were in it were dried up and burnt by the sun." Having seen the garden he turned and came back in twenty days.

When he was coming back he lacked water, and the bread also which he had carried was finished, and he was near to perish, and was in great tribulation through thirst, when suddenly he saw a damsel who was arrayed in a spotless linen garment and who carried a pitcher of water from which water dripped, and she was distant about half a mile from him. Then he followed her for three days, thinking that he would overtake her and drink, but he did not do so, although she seemed to him to be standing still in one place and bearing a pitcher. Then he despaired of obtaining water to drink, and he was brought very low, when suddenly there appeared to him there a herd of buffaloes. And among them there was one, which had with her a little sucking calf, and she

stood still before him; and he drew near and sucked milk from her. She came with him through all the desert even to his cell and gave him milk to drink, and she would not let her calf suck from her in those days.

On another occasion the brethren were digging a well in a certain place, which was called Thronon, when a serpent which belonged to the class of deadly serpents bit him. Then Macarius took hold of the serpent with his two hands by his upper and lower lip and, grasping him tightly, tore him in twain, from his head even to his tail, and said to him, "Since Christ did not send you, why did you dare to come here?" The blessed man had four cells in the desert: one in Scete, in the inner desert, one in Libya, one in the "Cells," and one in Mount Nitria. Two of these were without windows, and in them he used to dwell in darkness during the Forty Days Fast, another was so narrow that he could not stretch out his legs, but another, in which he used to receive the brethren who came to him, was wide and spacious. And he healed so many people who were possessed by devils that no man could count them. Once when I and the blessed Evagrius were there in his cell they brought to him from Thessalonica a certain virgin who had been a paralytic for many years, but by means of prayers and by anointing her with oil with his hands he cured her in twenty days and sent her away whole to her city and home; and when she had departed she sent to him gold and goods of various kinds.

Again, he heard from a certain man that the monks of the Monastery of Tabenna lived stern lives of self-denial, and he took counsel with himself, and put on the garb of a young man and a husbandman, and in fifteen days he went up to the Monastery of the Broken Ones by the way of the desert, and came to the Monastery of Tabenna, seeking to see the head of that Monastery whose name was Pachomius. Now Pachomius was a man elect and perfect, and he had the gift of prophecy, but the business of the blessed Macarius was hidden from him. And when Macarius saw him he said to him, "Abba, I beseech you to receive me into your monastery that I may be a monk." Pachomius said to him, "You are an old man, and are not able to fast. The brethren are men who fast, and you cannot endure their labors, and because you are not able to do this you will be offended, and you will go forth and will abuse them." He would receive him neither the first day nor the second day, nor any day until seven days were passed. But since he remained fasting throughout all these days he said to the head of the monastery, "Abba, receive me. If I do not fast like to you, and toil as you do, command them to cast me out." The head of the monastery persuaded the brethren to receive him. The number of the members of the brotherhood of that monastery was four hundred men, and they are thus even to this day; and they brought in Macarius.

When a few days had passed, the Forty Days Fast drew near, and Macarius saw that large numbers of the brethren kept the fast and observed the rule of the house in various ways. There were some who ate daily at eventide, and some who fasted for some nights, and there were also some who ate once in five days; and some stood up the whole night through, and sat down in the daytime. The blessed man Macarius took a large quantity of leaves of date palms, and brought them to his cell, and he stood up in one corner of it, and he neither touched bread nor water, nor bent the knee, nor lay down, until the forty days had passed, and the days of unleavened bread had come; but each Sunday he used to eat a few moist cabbage leaves so that he might pretend to be taking food. Whenever he went outside his cell for a needful purpose he returned straightaway and stood up in his place without speaking a word to any man; and he stood in his place and held his peace, and he used to do nothing else except pray within himself, and as he stood up he wove rope of the palm leaves. When all the brethren saw him they made a tumult against the head of their monastery, and said to him, "Why have you brought upon us this man, who has no body and who is incapable of being tired out, to judge us and to take vengeance upon us? Either send him away and let him depart, or know that we all will go away." When the head of the monastery had heard from the brethren concerning the fasting of Macarius and his rule of life, he prayed to God and entreated Him to reveal to him who this man was. It was revealed to him by God. Then he went and took him by his hand, and he brought him to the house of prayer to the place where the altar was established, and he answered and said to him, "Come, O blessed old man, you are Macarius, and you have hidden yourself from me. For the past many years I have earnestly desired to see you. Now I thank you that you have broken the heart of the brethren somewhat, so that they may not imagine any longer that they observe their fast with excessive rigour. Go then in peace to your place, for in no slight measure have you edified us, and do continue to pray for us." Pachomius having persuaded him, Macarius departed from there.

Macarius used to say, "Every kind and variety of rule of the life of self-denial and fasting which I have desired to observe with all my heart have I kept, but there came upon me the desire that my mind should be with God in heaven if only for five days, and that I should be exalted above the anxious cares and thoughts of material things." Having meditated upon this thing, I shut the door of the courtyard and of the cell, I constrained myself so that I might not give a word to any man. I continued thus, began to fulfill this thought on the second day of the week, and commanded my mind, and said to it, "You shall not descend from heaven, for behold, there you have angels,

and the princes of angels, and all the hosts which are in heaven, and especially the Good and Gracious God, the Lord of all. You shall not come down from heaven." Continuing thus I was sufficient for this thing for two days and two nights, and I constrained the evil to such a degree that he became a flame of fire and burnt up everything which I had in my cell. At length the very mat upon which I stood blazed with fire. I thought that I should be wholly consumed. When, finally, fear of the fire took hold upon me my mind came down from heaven on the third day, because I was unable to keep my mind collected in the state in which it had been. I came down to the contemplation of the world and its things. This happened so that I might not boast.

On another occasion I went to his cell, and I found a priest lying there by the side of the door; his whole head was consumed, and was eaten into holes by the disease which is called cancer, and the bone of his skull was showing through. This man had come to him to be healed, but Macarius did not wish to see him. I myself begged the blessed man and said to him, "I beseech you to have mercy upon him, and to give to him a word." Then he answered and said to me, "He is not worthy to be healed, for this punishment was sent upon him from God. But if you desire that he shall be healed persuade him to forsake the ministration at the altar, for he used both to be minister at the altar and to commit fornication, and for this reason he was punished. Persuade him then to forsake his ministrations, and God will heal him." Having said these things to the sick man he pledged himself and swore an oath, saying, "I will never minister at the altar again." Afterwards Macarius received him, and said to him, "Do you believe that God exists?" The priest replied, "Yes, master." Again Macarius said to him, "Perhaps you are able to scoff at God." The priest said to him, "No." Then the blessed man said to him, "If now you acknowledge your folly, and also that your punishment was from God and that it was a fitting punishment for your deeds, first of all confess your transgressions." The priest gave a promise that he would not sin again, and that he would not minister at the altar, but that he would lead a life which was suited to the capacity and grade of those who were in the world. Macarius laid his hand upon him, and in a few days he was made whole, and the hair grew upon his head again, and he went to his house healed whilst I was looking at him.

Again a certain young man who had an evil devil was brought to him and he laid one hand on the head of the young man and another on his heart, and he prayed until he made the devil to rise up in the air, upon which the young man breathed out his breath and became like a great empty skin bottle; and he suddenly uttered a cry, and water flowed out from all parts of his members, and he was made whole and became as he was before the devil entered into him.

Then Macarius anointed him with the oil of the martyrs, and commanded his father that he was not to taste flesh or wine for forty days, until he was thoroughly healed.

Again on a certain occasion certain thoughts of vainglory vexed him, and urged him to go forth from his cell and to depart and heal the multitudes in Rome and to give assistance to those who were lying there sick, for the grace and might of God were inciting him greatly to heal those who were possessed of devils and to make whole those who were diseased; but although he was much disturbed in his mind on this matter, yet he was not persuaded to go, for the Evil greatly pressed upon him in his thoughts. Finally, however, he lay down inside the door of his cell, and having set his legs (or feet) on the threshold, he cried out and said, "Pull, unclean devils, pull hard, for I will never go thither on my legs, and if you are able to carry me you must do so thus." He took an oath to them i.e., the brethren, saying, "I continued to lie thus until the evening, and if you had not lifted me up, I should never have moved from my place." When the night had come he stood up.

Again, on another occasion, when these thoughts were mounting up in his mind he filled with sand a basket which held two or three bushels, and lifting it on his shoulders he began to wander about with it in the desert. His kinsman Theosebius the Antiochian met him and he said to him, "What are you carrying on your shoulders, father? Tell me so that I may carry your load, and that you may not toil yourself." He said to him, "I am making to work that which has made me to work, for it wishes to go forth from its state of rest, and it fatigues me." Having walked about for a long time he went into his cell, having exhausted his body.

One day there laid hold upon me the chills of fever, and I went and sat down, and watched him from the window, in the feebleness of his old age. I was thinking about him that he was like to one of the brethren of old, and I began to listen to him that I might see what he was saying, or what he was doing. He was alone inside his cell, and he was one hundred years old, and moreover, his teeth had fallen out by reason of his old age. I listened to him and to what he was saying, and he was striving with his soul and with Satan, and he was saying to himself, "What do you wish for, O you wicked old man? Behold, you have eaten oil, and you have drunk wine, what more do you wish for? Would you eat Satan's white food?" He was reviling himself. Moreover he said to Satan, "I cannot conquer you in any wise, and you are not able to do anything to me; go away from me." He said to himself, "How long shall I be with you?"

Paphnutius, the disciple of this man, related to myself and to the blessed

Evagrius, saying, "One day a female hyena took her whelp, which was blind, and came and knocked with her head at the door of the court when he was sitting in, and she dropped the help at his feet. And he took up the whelp, and prayed, and spat in its eyes, and straightaway its eyes were opened and it saw; and its mother gave it suck, and then took it up and went forth. And one day later she brought to the blessed man a sheep-skin cloak, that is to say, a skin which has been stripped off a sheep; and the blessed woman Melania spoke to me concerning this sheep-skin cloak, saying, "I myself received this sheep-skin cloak from the hands of Macarius as a blessing." Paphnutius also spoke thus, "From the first day where on he received baptism he never spat upon the ground, and he lived for sixty years after his baptism."

In his latter days he was beardless, and he only had a small quantity of hair upon his upper lip and upon his chin; because by reason of his excessive fasting and the abstinence of his solitary life not even the hair of his beard would grow. I once went to him when weariness of the ascetic life had laid hold upon me, and I said to him, "Father, what shall I do? For my thoughts vex me, and say to me, You are doing no good, get you gone from here." He said to me, "Say to your thoughts, For Christ's sake I will guard these walls." I have written for you these few things out of a very large number concerning the life and deeds of the holy man Macarius, and concerning the solitary monks who were his companions; and everything is indeed true. I entreat all those brethren who read in this book, or who desire to take a copy, not to forget to write after this section the narrative which is found in certain of the codices at the end of the above history which relates to the matters of Macarius, as if these histories had been composed by Hieronymus, but they must know that of a certainty that they were composed by Palladius. For I have found the absolute ending of this book which belonged to the histories of the matters of Macarius, with an apology and a preface which were composed by Palladius and addressed to Lausus the Prefect, in which he makes known concerning all the various kinds of the diverse histories of men and of women which were composed by him; and I will prepare this apology and preface, and by the help of God I will write them down in the proper place.

19. Of the Blessed Man Paul the Simple

NOW THERE WAS A CERTAIN HUSBANDMAN whose name was Paul, who was more simple and innocent in nature than are usually the children of men; and he had a wife who was beautiful in her appearance, and wicked in her

deeds and actions, and she had wandered from him and had been committing adultery for a long time. And one day, suddenly Paul went into his house from the field, and he found her and another working impurity together; now this took place so that Divine Grace might incite Paul to follow that which was more excellent. And having gone in and seen them, he laughed chastely, and answered and said, "It is good, it is good, truly she is not accounted mine by me. By Jesus, henceforth I will not take her again. Get you going, and behold she is yours, she and her children: and as for me, I will go and become a monk." Saying nothing to any man he went away a journey of eight stages, and he arrived at the cell of Saint Anthony the Great. Having knocked at the door, the blessed man Mar Anthony went out, and he said to Paul, "What do you seek?" Paul said to him, "I seek to become a monk." Saint Anthony answered and said to him, "You are an old man eighty years old, and it is impossible for you to become a monk here; but depart to the village, and work in the fields for your living, and give thanks to God at the same time that you are not able to endure the afflictions of the desert."

Again Paul answered and said to him, "Whatever you will teach me, that will I do." Anthony said to him, "I have told you that you are an old man, and you can not do it; but if you wish to become a monk, get you gone to some monastic house, and abide where the brethren are many, and where they will be able to bear with your sickness. As for me, I live by myself alone here, and I only eat once in five days, and even then I do not eat a full meal." With these and suchlike words did Anthony frighten Paul. As he would not be persuaded to depart, Anthony went into his cell, and shut the door upon himself for three days, and because of him he did not go outside his cell for three whole days, not even for his needs sake. Nevertheless Paul did not go away; and on the fourth day, when his need compelled him, Anthony opened the door and went forth. He said to Paul, "Get you gone, O old man, why do you trouble me? It is impossible for you to stay here." Paul said to him, "It is impossible for me to die in any other place except this."

The blessed Anthony, having looked carefully and seen that he was carrying no food with him, and no bread and no water, and that he had fasted during the four days which he had remained, said within himself, "Perhaps he will escape and die, and will plunge my soul in tribulation." He accepted him and brought him into his cell. And because of Paul during those days Anthony performed exceedingly severe ascetic labors, the like of which, even in his early manhood, he had never performed. He soaked palm leaves in water, and gave them to Paul, and said to him, "Take these palm leaves, and weave a mat even as do I myself." The old man Paul took them, and wove them into a mat fifteen

cubits long, until at the ninth hour he was exhausted. Anthony, seeing what he had woven, was angry with him, and said to him, "You have woven the leaves loosely, unweave them, and weave them over again neatly and closely." Paul unwove what he had woven, and wove the leaves over again, but still he wove too loosely, because the leaves had become twisted through the former weaving and unweaving. Meanwhile Paul was fasting all these days, and Anthony laid these hard labors upon him while his soul was vexed with hunger, so that he might become disgusted and depart from him.

When Anthony saw that Paul was neither angry nor wrathful, and that he made no complaint, his mercy made itself manifest; and behold when Paul had lived there another day, he said to him, "Do you wish to eat a piece of bread?" The old man Paul said to him, "As it pleases you, father." This also especially shamed Saint Anthony that he did not hasten in his desire to the promise of food, but that he cast all his desire upon him. Thus Anthony said to him, "Set the table and bring bread." Anthony placed on the table four loaves, each of which was of the weight of about six ounces, and he dipped them in water because they were dry, and he placed one before himself and three before Paul. Having placed them there he sang a psalm which he knew twelve times, and he recited twelve prayers that he might try Paul, but Paul prayed with him in gladness; and after the twelve prayers they sat down to eat in the late evening. Having eaten one loaf Anthony did not touch another, but the old man Paul ate slowly, and when Anthony had finished he had still some of his loaf to eat, and Anthony was waiting for him to finish it. And having finished it, he answered and said to him, "O my little father, will you eat another loaf?" Paul said to him, "If you will eat another I will also; but if you will not, I will not." Anthony said to him, "I have had enough, for I am a monk." Paul said to him, "I also have had enough, for I also seek to become a monk." After these things Anthony again stood up, and made twelve prayers, and when they had said together the psalms twelve times they slept for a little during the night, and then they sang and prayed until the morning.

When Anthony saw that the old man was carrying out with gladness a rule of life similar to his own in every respect, he said to him, "If you are able to bear every day passed in this wise, then stay with me." Paul said to him, "Although I know nothing else, yet the things which I do know I can perform easily." On another day Anthony said to him, "Behold, you have become a monk." A few months afterward when Anthony saw that his soul was perfect before God, and that he was simple beyond measure, and that Divine Grace was helping him, he built him a cell at a distance of about three or four miles away, and said to him, "Behold, you are a monk, and henceforth you must

live by yourself so that you may receive the temptation of devils." When Paul had lived by himself for a year, the gift of healing and of casting out devils was given to him.

In those times they brought to Anthony a certain man who was vexed by a fierce devil, and that devil was one of the princes of the devils, and he was so fierce that he would even revile and blaspheme the heavens. When Anthony saw the man he said, "I cannot heal this man, for over this race of princes neither the gift nor the power of healing has been given to me; to Paul it belongs to heal this man." Anthony therefore took them with him and went to him, and said to him, "O Abba Paul, cast out this devil from this man, so that, being made whole, he may depart to his house." Paul said to him, "And what will you do?" Anthony said to him, "I am not able to do it, for I have other work to do." He left the man with Paul and went back to his cell. Then the old man Paul arose up, prayed a prayer with great feeling, and began to speak to that devil, saying, "Father Anthony says, Go forth from this man." The devil answered with blasphemies, saying, "I will not go out, O you who eat white bread." The old man took his shoulder garment (or skull cap), and began to smite the devil on his back and sides, saying, "I tell you that Abba Anthony says, Get out from him." The devil began to curse and revile Abba Anthony and the old man Paul. Finally Paul said to him, "Will you go out, or must I go and tell Christ, yes Jesus? For if you will not go forth I will go and tell Christ, and great woe shall come upon you." Again he blasphemed and said, "I will not go forth."

Then was the blessed man Paul angry with him, and he went out from his cell. It was the season of noon, and the heat with the Egyptians at this time is so fierce that it is akin to the heat of the fiery furnace of the Babylonians. He stood upon a stone and prayed, and spoke thus, "Behold, O Jesus Christ, Who was crucified in the days of Pontius Pilate, I will not come down from this stone, and I will neither eat nor drink until I die unless You do cast out that devil from this man, and do set him free from him." Whilst these words were yet in his mouth the devil cried out by reason of his tribulation, and said, "By Hercules, by whom am I ruled, by Hercules, I am being persecuted with violence, for the simplicity of Paul pursues me; whither shall I go?" Paul says to him, "To the uttermost depths of the abyss." Straightaway the devil went forth from the man, and he transformed himself and became like to a mighty dragon seventy cubits long, and he wriggled along the ground and in this wise went down to the Red Sea, that might be fulfill led that which is written, "Perfect faith removes mountains." This is the triumph of Paul, who was called the "Simple" by the whole brotherhood.

20. Of The Blessed Man Pachomius

THERE WAS ALSO ANOTHER MAN WHOSE NAME WAS PACHOMIUS, who was seventy years old who dwelt in that mountain called "Scete." I went to him once when lustful thoughts concerning women were afflicting me, my mind was dark and obscured by the thoughts of lust, and by the visions and heaviness of the nights, and when I was well near departing from the desert, for lust laid upon me many things hard to bear. I did not reveal to my neighbours and to the brethren who were living with me my tribulations, and not even to my master Evagrius; but I went forth and I began to wander about in the desert, and I saw one of the old men who had grown old in the place. They were all perfect fathers and after this I saw this blessed old man Pachomius, and I found that he was superior to them all in his life, and deeds, and in his understanding. I took courage to reveal to him the strife of my mind, and he spoke to me thus, "Do not imagine that this is a strange matter in any way. This thing has not happened to you through your own negligence, and the place itself in which you live is a witness for you, for it is restricted in the matter of things of every kind, and there is no woman in it; this lust has fallen upon you through your strenuousness. For this warfare of lust and also of fornication is of a threefold character; sometimes it sets our body against us when it is healthy and well fed, and at others lust itself, with the natural passion which is implanted in us attacks us, and at others the Evil himself because of his envy. I have watched many times, and I have found that it is even as I have said to you." He said to me, "I, the old man whom you see have lived in this cell for forty years, and I have taken the utmost care for my life and for the redemption of my soul, and even in this period of great old age, in which you see that I am, I am greatly tormented by lust."

He assured me with an oath, saying, "When I was fifty years old lust placed itself upon me for twelve years, never going away from me either by day or by night, and I thought in my mind that God had forsaken me, and therefore (for to such an extent had lust gained dominion over me) I determined in my heart that I would either suffer death through dumb beasts, or that I should become laughing stock or a man condemned through the lust of the body. I went forth and wandered round about in the desert, and I found a den of hyenas, and I laid myself down naked at the entrance of it that they might come out and devour me. When it was evening as it is written, 'He has made the darkness, and it becomes night, in which all the beasts of the forest do move.' The lions roar to break their prey the hyenas, both male and female, came out, and they all sniffed at me, and licked my body from my head to my feet, and while I

was thinking that they would eat me they went away from me; and there I remained the whole of that night, and they ate me not. Again I thought that God had had compassion upon me, and straightaway I returned and came to my cell. That devil of lust, having forborne with me a little, returned once again, and moreover he attacked me more fiercely than before, and he did so with such vigour that by reason of my affliction I well near cursed myself. This devil of lust used to take the form of an Ethiopian damsel whom I saw in my early manhood gathering canes in the summer, and he came in her form and sat upon my knees, and he used to set me on fire with lust to such an extent that I imagined I was having intercourse with her, and when through the burning of my heart and the madness of it, I gave her the cheek, straightaway she would lift herself up from me and take to flight. From the time when I touched her, my hand was so polluted that for the space of two hours afterwards whenever I brought my hand near me I was unable to free it from her foulness. But again I went forth because of my affliction, and I began to wander about in the desert, and I found a small asp, and I took it and placed its head upon the members of my body, and I squeezed the head of the asp so that it might bite me and I might die, and so find relief, but it bit me not.

After this I heard a voice which came to my ears and said to me, 'Depart, Pachomius, and be strong; I have allowed you to be overcome in order that you might not imagine that you was a mighty man and a man of perfection, and that you had triumphed through your own life and deeds, but that you might know your infirmity, and the feebleness of your nature, and that you might not rely upon your asceticism but might confess the help of God and cry out to Him always.' Having heard these words I returned to my cell, and I dwelt in it with great boldness of heart, and I never again had anxious care concerning this warfare of lust, but I continued in peace for the rest of my days after this warfare. The devil of lust, seeing that I no longer meditated about the matter, never again approached me.

With these words about the striving against Satan the holy man Pachomius confirmed me, and he made me strong to play the man more and more, and to be mighty in the warfare against the devil of fornication, and he dismissed me and said to me, "Be strong and mighty in our Lord."

21. Of the Blessed Man Stephen

STEPHEN WAS A MAN WHO WAS BY RACE OF THE LIBYANS who dwell by the side of Marmarica and Mareotis, and he lived there for sixty years. Now

in another codex the text reads differently, thus: There was also in the desert a certain blessed man whose name was Stephen, and he was by race a Libyan from the border (or side) of Marmarica; and he dwelt there in the desert for sixty years. Having attained to the heights of a perfect rule of life, he was esteemed by Divine Grace worthy of the gift of discerning prudence and of the faculty of giving consolation to such an extent that whosoever drew near to him, being afflicted in any way whatsoever, departed from him with joy. The blessed Anthony was acquainted with this man. This Stephen continued in this life even to our own days, but I never lived with him and I never met him, because the mountain in which he dwelt was a long way off from me.

The holy men Ammonius and Evagrius, however, who went to visit him related to me stories concerning him, and they said, "Having gone to him we found him grievously sick of a certain sore sickness which had come upon him, for a cancerous sore had broken out in the lower parts of his body; now this sore is called gangrene, and we found him being cut by a certain physician. Nevertheless the holy man was working with his hands and was plaiting palm leaves, and he held converse with us whilst portions of his body were being cut off. And he possessed the faculty of patient endurance to such a degree that it seemed as if the body of someone else was being cut instead of his own; now when his members had been shorn off like hair he continued, through the grace of God, to be without perception of it. Whilst the physician was binding him up he sat still and plaited baskets with his hands, and he conversed with us, rejoicing and giving thanks to God. Moreover, he displayed such patient endurance whilst his member was being cut off that one might have thought that it had not been cut off at all, and he resembled altogether a man from whose body threads of hair are being plucked. We stood there and marveled at this affliction, for we could not bear to see the man who had led a life of such ascetic and spiritual excellences fall into such a state of suffering that at length amputation of his members was necessary. The blessed man, having perceived our thoughts and seen that it grieved us, answered and said to us, "O my sons, do not be afflicted concerning this matter, and do not lessen your faith because of this thing, for God never performs anything whatsoever that is evil, on the contrary, He looks for a happy conclusion to His work. Oh, how many were the times when these members were condemned to punishment! For they merited being cut off, and it is better that they should receive their reward here than after their departure out of this world."

These were the things which he spoke to us, and he comforted us and sent us away, saying, "Do not be scandalized when you see trials of this kind coming upon holy men, for by such God has built us up and comforted us,

and has made us to be confirmed in the laws which are against tribulations." I have related these things in order that we may not wonder when we see the saints falling into tribulations.

It prefaces concerning those who have fallen into the Errors of Satan. It is necessary, O my brethren, that we should also keep in memory the histories which concern the life and deeds of those who have tripped up and fallen as an excellent admonition of those who come across this book (just as among the trees that were in Paradise the Tree of Good and Evil was also found), so that if it happen that certain men lead good lives through the Grace and help of God, Who is accustomed to help those whose motive of soul is directed straight to the mark, they may not be exalted overmuch and have pride in their works of ascetic excellence. For on many occasions this very excellence itself has been the cause of a fall when it has not been made perfect by means of a correct motive, for it is written, "I have seen the righteous man who has perished in his righteousness, which also is vanity."

22. Of Valens the Palestinian

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN WHOSE NAME WAS VALENS, who was by race a Palestinian and by education a Corinthian. The blessed Paul ascribed to the Corinthians as a special attribute the passion of pride and inflatedness. Having come to the desert and dwelt with us for many years, at length he arrived at such a degree of vaunting that he was laughed at by the devils; and from this state he went astray, little by little, until he was derided by them, and they became able to make him think that angels were appearing to him. Therefore one day, according to what they relate concerning him, as he was working in the dark at the labor of his hands, the needle with which he was sewing together the palm leaves fell down on the ground, and although he searched for it he could not find it; and a devil lit a fire for him until he found it, and because of this thing he became the more proud. And at length he became so proud, and allowed such arrogant thoughts to rise up in his mind that he despised and thought scorn of the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. And moreover, it came to pass that certain men of discernment came and brought to the church some dried fruits as a means of obtaining a blessing, and the blessed Macarius, our elder, received them and sent them to the brethren, that is, some to every man in his cell, and among the brethren he also sent some to Valens. Valens took the man who had been sent to bring the fruit to him, and heaped insults upon him and struck him, saying, "Go and say to Macarius I am neither inferior to you nor am I more of

a servant than are you, that you should send me a blessing.”

Macarius knew that he had been laid hold upon by error, and he rose up and went to him at the turn of the day that he might persuade him, and he said to him, “Valens, Valens, you have made yourself a laughing stock, and have fallen into error; receive then correction”; but seeing that he was unwilling to hearken to his admonition and reproof he left him and departed. Having become more confirmed in his pride, and having reached the summit of it, that devil, who had completely led him astray, went and made to himself a form in which he resembled our Redeemer; and he came to him by night, together with phantoms of angels in great numbers who marched along bearing lamps and wax candles, and they advanced with chariots and carriages of fire, as if that devil were Christ Himself. Then one of the angels came forward to him, and said to him, “Christ loves greatly your life and deeds, and your boldness of speech, and He has come to see you. Get out from your cell, and do nothing except such things as I shall tell you. When you see Him afar off fall down and worship Him, and go back to your cell.”

Therefore when Valens had gone forth and seen the ranks of phantoms bearing lamps of fire, and Antichrist himself sitting upon a chariot of fire—now he was distant from him about a mile, he fell down and worshipped him. And Valens was so much injured in his mind that at the turn of the day he was sufficiently mad to come into the church and to say before all the brotherhood who were assembled, “I have no need to become a partaker in the offering, for this day I have seen Christ Himself.” Then the fathers tied him up and put iron fetters upon him for about the space of one year, and in this way they made him whole; and he was praying continually, and they humbled him and brought him down from the exalted conception which he held concerning himself by means of sundry and diverse works of a lovely and humble character, and thus they rooted out from him pride, even as it is written, “Each opposing sickness must be healed by medicines which are contrary and opposite to it.”

23. Of Hero the Alexandrian (Bishop of Diospolis about A.D. 365)

THERE WAS ALSO MY NEIGHBOUR, a man whose name was Ahron (Hero), who was by race an Alexandrian; now his early manhood was exceedingly glorious, and he was enlightened in his mind, and his intellect was keen, and the habits of his life were pure. This man, I say, after performing many labors was also seized by the passion of boasting and pride, and he wavered and fell; and he evolved in his mind and imagined great things against the

fathers, and he reviled also the blessed Evagrius, saying, "Those who allow themselves to be persuaded into accepting your doctrine certainly go astray and err, for men require no other teacher than Christ." He put forward and urged in witness of his words, with foolish intent, the speech from the Gospel (which our Redeemer also spoke), "You shall call no man master on the earth." His understanding became so greatly blinded that at length on him also iron fetters fell, and he was fast bound, because he would neither be persuaded nor would he receive or be a partaker of the Holy Mysteries, although he loved the truth greatly. Now, the food upon which he lived was too little and the habits of his life were immeasurably strict, for according to what those who were continually with him used to relate, on several occasions he only partook of a meal once in three months, the participation in the Mysteries only being sufficient for him; but if it happened that he came across some wild herbs by chance he would eat them.

I myself, with the blessed man Albinus, received an experience of him when we were going to Scete. Scete was forty miles distant from us, and we partook of two meals and drank water three times on the way, whilst he tasted nothing at all during his journey with us. He travelled on foot, and he was repeating passages from the Scriptures by heart; during the time that he went with us, he repeated passages from the Scriptures and sang fifteen Psalms, and he repeated the Beatitudes and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the book of Isaiah the Prophet, and a portion of Jeremiah, and after that the Gospel of Saint Luke, and after that the Proverbs; and in spite of all this we were unable to overtake him as he trudged along. Now therefore this man was at length persecuted by lust as by a fire, and he was never again able to dwell in his cell, but he went to Alexandria, and by reason of his pride it happened to him, through Divine Providence, even as it is said, "One good is rooted up by another."

Nevertheless, having fallen willingly into a state of indifference, he finally found redemption. He was present continually at the shows of the theatres and circuses, and he was never absent from the public drinking rooms of the taverns; and thus whilst he was leading this life of prodigality and drunkenness he fell and was brought to a standstill in the miry ditch of the lust of women. At length he went to one of those women who are at the head of the grade of harlots, and because of his passion with all boldness he held converse with her, and these things having thus been done by him there broke out in the place of his nature a carbuncle which grew with great vigour, and his sickness waxed sore upon him for a space of six months, and his members rotted away and they had to be cut off. By these means he became finally cured, but he remained without members; and afterwards he went back again to the integrity

of his nature, and to divine thoughts. He came to the desert and confessed all these things to the fathers, and though he remained not a long time there he did not flee from leading the ascetic life, nor from weeping because of what had happened to him, nor from offering up the repentance which was right. After a few days he died and departed from this world.

24. Of Ptolemy the Egyptian Who Was in Scete

THERE WAS ALSO ANOTHER MAN WHOSE NAME WAS PTOLEMY, and he was by race from Egypt, and he observed a rule of life which no man is able to describe, or rather it is very difficult to relate the story of his life. He dwelt away beyond Scete in that district which is called "Klimax." it is impossible for a man to dwell in this place for its ruggedness. It was distant from the stream of water from which the brethren used to draw twelve miles. This man Ptolemy used to take many vessels for water, and carry them to a certain spot where much dew fell, and in December and January he used to collect it, for in those countries the dewfall is abundant. Having gathered together for himself water in sponges from time to time they were squeezed out by him, and the water which he had collected from the dew ran out, and this he was in the habit of doing during the fifteen years which he dwelt there. This man, having for much time been deprived of teaching, and of the meetings with the holy fathers, and of the intercourse of edifying speech, and especially of participation in the Mysteries, went as wholly astray from the straight path as if he had said, "The matters of service, that is to say, the Holy Mysteries, are nothing at all." From this state he senselessly departed and went on until at length he went into Egypt and delivered himself over to prodigal and riotous living, and he never more spoke a word of excellence to any man. And his madness came upon Ptolemy also because of the senseless and exalted opinion which he held of himself, even as it is written, "Those who are not under the law of the governors shall fall like leaves."

25. Of Abraham the Egyptian

THERE WAS ALSO A CERTAIN MAN WHOSE NAME WAS ABRAHAM, and he kept a rule of life of the sternest hardness in the desert; and he was hurt in his understanding by reason of the vain opinion which he held concerning himself. One day he came to the church and strove with the elders, saying,

“I have been made an elder by Christ during the past night, and you must associate me in the ministrations of the priesthood.” When the fathers had come to a decision concerning him, and had brought him out of the desert, they laid a light rule of life upon him, and in this manner they cured him of his arrogance, and brought him to the state of being sensible of his feebleness, and of having knowledge of his infirmity, through which the devils made a mock of him.

26. Of A Certain Virgin Who Was in Jerusalem

MOREOVER, I SAW A CERTAIN VIRGIN IN JERUSALEM who had been clothed in sackcloth for three years, and she had secluded herself in a solitary cell, and had never permitted herself to enjoy any of the desirable things in which there is pleasure. Now this woman, having been forsaken by the Divine Providence, because of her immeasurable pride and arrogance fell into the ditches of fornication, and she opened the window of the habitation in which she had secluded herself, and received the man who ministered to her, and she had intercourse with him. Because she did not continue to persevere in faith and in the ascetic life with a perfect will, and with a mind which possessed Divine love, but departed from there for the sake of men, that is to say, for the sake of vainglory, doing so, moreover, with an evil intent and with a corrupt and lascivious mind for her own thoughts having been cut off, since they had been robbed of the Divine understanding, she came to the condition of casting blame upon others. The guardian of chastity did not remain with her.

27. Of the Virgin Who Was in Caesarea of Palestine

AGAIN THERE WAS A CERTAIN VIRGIN who was the daughter of an elder in Caesarea, and having been beguiled and led astray by a man, he who led her astray taught her to bring an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. The time having arrived when it was known to all that she was with child, and being called upon by her father to confess her matter, she made an accusation against that reader. Her father, the elder, because he believed her implicitly, made known the matter to the Bishop, and the Bishop was a holy man, and a fearer of God, and one who did not hastily pass sentence of death or punishment upon any man, and then only when it was revealed to him by God whether he who was accused before him was indeed guilty or

not. So the Bishop went and shut himself up until the matter was made plain to him; and because God informed him that the reader had never been near to the woman he held him to be innocent, and condemned the virgin.

28. Of A Certain Woman Who Fell and Repented

THERE WAS A CERTAIN VIRGIN WHO WAS A NUN, and who dwelt with two other nuns, and she had led a life of abstinence and voluntary self-denial for nine or ten years. Having been beguiled and led astray by a certain singer of Psalms, she tripped, and fell, and conceived, and gave birth to a child; now she hated with the fullest hatred him that had beguiled her. And she repented within herself with a perfect repentance, and she followed after repentance with such vigour that she went beyond the bounds of what was seemly, and she continued to observe fasts with such self-denial and strictness that she well near died of hunger. In her prayers she used to make supplication, saying, "O God, Who supports and sustains all creation, and Who does not desire the death and destruction of those who err and commit sin. If You wish me to live before You, show me a marvelous thing in this matter, and gather in this fruit of sin which I have brought forth, lest, because I cannot again attain to chastity, I kill myself through reproach and disgrace." Having made supplication for this thing, she was hearkened to, and he who had been born to her did not remain very long alive.

From the day in which she fell and onwards she neither saw him that had beguiled her and led her captive, nor held converse with him, but she gave herself to frequent fasting and to ministering to the women who were sick and smitten with disease for the whole of a period of thirty years; and thus her repentance was accepted by God, and He at length revealed to a certain holy old man concerning her, saying, "Such and such a woman is very much more pleasing to Me by her penitence than by her virginity."

I write down these things in order that, if any man be observing a correct rule of life of any kind whatever which is pleasing to God, he may take heed lest he fall, and that even if he be tripped up in a snare and fall he may not come to despair, and remain in his fallen condition, but that by leaning upon the staff of the hope of the Divine Mercy, and by arraying himself through repentance in the apparel of simplicity and humility he may again become strong enough to stand up, for we should not despise those who truly repent.

29. Of Another Virgin who Fell and Repented

A CERTAIN VIRGIN, THE DAUGHTER OF AN ELDER in Caesarea of Palestine, having been beguiled and led astray by a man, fell, and he who had beguiled her instructed her to make an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. And the time having arrived when her conception became known, and being called upon to confess her matter by her father, she made the accusation against that reader, and the elder, her father, at this, like one who believed her implicitly, made the affair known to the Bishop. Then the Bishop laid his hand upon the shrine, and commanded that the reader should be called, and his affair having been enquired into, like one who was confident in his own integrity, he was unwilling to confess that he had done the wrong; for how was it possible for him to accuse himself of that which he had not done? The Bishop becoming angry said to him, "Will you not confess, O wretched and polluted man, you guilty one who are full of uncleanness?" The reader made answer to him, saying, "Master, I have neither knowledge nor feeling about this matter, for my thoughts and mind are clean in respect of it, and no thought concerning this woman has ever entered my mind. But if you wish to hear that which has never taken place I will say that I myself committed the offence." Having spoken thus, the Bishop immediately removed the reader from his position. Then the reader drew near and entreated the Bishop, saying, "Master, since I have tripped up and fallen, give the command that the woman be given to me to wife, for I am no longer a cleric, and she is not a virgin." The Bishop gave the woman to the reader to wife, because he thought that he was held by love of her, and that he could not cut the affair concerning her out of his thoughts.

When the reader had received the woman from the Bishop, he placed her in a religious house for women, and he begged the woman who ministered to the wants of the sisters to take great care of her immediately. A short time afterwards the day arrived in which she must give birth to her child, but the poor creature was not able to bring it to the birth, and although she could hardly bear the cruel and violent pains of her birth-pangs which were bringing her to the house of the dead, her child did not come forth. Three days passed by until the seventh day arrived, and by reason of her great and frequent sufferings the woman was near to come to Sheol; and she neither ate, nor drank, nor slept, but she was crying out and saying, "Woe to me, for I am dying, and I made an accusation of fatherhood against such and such a reader." The women who were standing before her having heard these words made them known to her father, who, however, fearing lest he should be blamed severely

because he had made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader, held his peace concerning the matter for another two days; and meanwhile the young woman neither gained relief from her sufferings nor died. Therefore when the nuns could no longer bear the pain of her violent shrieks, they ran and told the Bishop, saying, "Such and such a woman has for some days past been crying out and confessing that she made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader." Then the Bishop sent deacons to him with the message, "Pray you, that the woman who made an accusation against you may have relief"; but the reader answered them never a word. Now he had not opened his door since the day on which the accusation had been made against him, but he entreated God and made supplication to him that the matter might become known and the truth revealed. Thereupon the father of the woman went to the Bishop, and prayer was offered up in the church, but even by these proceedings the woman did not obtain relief. Then the Bishop rose up and went to the reader, and knocked at the door and the reader opened it to him, and he went in to him and said, "Eustathius, rise up and unloose that which you has fastened." At once the reader knelt down with the Bishop, and they prayed to God, and immediately the woman gave birth to her child. Thus were the supplication of this man and his constant persistence in prayer able to clear away oppression and to chastise and rebuke also the woman who made the false accusation. For from that day onwards she fulfill led the days of her life with good works; and we should learn to be constant in prayer and to recognize the power of it when it is offered to God with the deep feeling of the whole heart.

30. Of the Blessed Woman Thais or Thaisis

AND NOW I DESIRE TO NARRATE TO YOU the excellent history and the great Repentance of the blessed woman, Thais or Thaisis. For speech concerning her is most excellent, and it is full of encouragement and penitence of soul to those who love God. This woman had a mother who, because her daughter was beautiful of face, made her to take up a position in the market, and the rumor of her beauty travelled to every place, and those who were living afar off desired greatly to see her; and no man who looked upon her was satisfied with the sight of her face, because she burned like a flame of fire into the hearts of those who saw her, and many by reason of their mad love for her sold whatever property they had to her parents that they might have commerce with her. When Bessarion, the servant of God, heard these things concerning this woman and that through her beauty she was dragging many to destruction,

he arrayed himself in the apparel of a man who was in the world, and took with him one dinar and went to her, and when he saw her he brought forth the dinar and gave it to her; and having taken the dinar she said to him, "Let us go into a room," and he said to her, "Yes, let us go in." Having gone in, the blessed man Bessarion saw the couch which was laid out, now it was a very high one, and the woman said to the old man, "Come, get up on this bed"; and he said to her, "Have you not inside this chamber, another room?" and she said to him, "Yes." Then he said to her, "Let us then: go in there." Thais answered and said to him, "If it is that you are ashamed of men seeing you, know that no man can see us in this chamber; but if it be God of Whom you are afraid He can see us in whatever place we enter." The blessed man Bessarion hearing these words, said to her, "My daughter, do you know that God exists?" She said to him, "Yes, I know that God exists, and that there will be kingdom, and judgement." Then the old man said to her, "If you know that God exists, and that there will be kingdom and judgement, why do you destroy men in this manner?" Immediately the woman cast herself at his feet, and said to him, "I know that there is repentance for those who sin. But I beseech you, master, to tarry with me for three hours, and whatsoever you wish to do to me that do because of all the evil things which have been done by me." Having told her in what place he would await her he left her and went away.

Then in that same hour the woman took everything which she had gained by fornication and burnt it with fire in the midst of the city, and she said, "Come, all you who have had commerce with me, and see that I am burning before your eyes every possession which I have gathered together by means of sin"; and the things which were burned were worth three hundred pounds of gold, and there were there also goods and apparel of all kinds; and after she had burned up everything she went to the blessed man Bessarion. When Bessarion saw her he took her by her hand and led her along and brought her to a religious house of sisters, and he shut her in a little cell, leaving her only one small window in the wall through which a woman passed in food to her. The blessed Bessarion said to the head of the house, "Give her a pound of dry bread each day, and water according to her need." Then the blessed woman Thais said to the venerable Bessarion, "With what petition do you command me to pray to God, that He should forgive me my sins?" The blessed Bessarion said to her, "You are neither worthy to pray to God, nor to make mention of His Name with your lips, nor to stretch out your hands to Him; for your lips are unclean and polluted, and your hands are contaminated with impurity; you shall only sit down and gaze towards the East, and you shall say nothing except, 'O You who did create me, have mercy upon me.'" Having dwelt in

that cell for a space of about three years, the blessed Bessarion had mercy upon her, and the blessed man went to Abba Anthony that he might learn from him whether God had forgiven her sins or not. Then having spoken concerning her to Anthony that blessed man called to his disciples, and said to them, "Let each one of you shut himself in his cell all night, and pray to God that we may see to whom shall be revealed the matter concerning which the blessed Bessarion has come to us this day."

When they all had done as they had been commanded and when a long time had elapsed, the blessed Paul, the chief of the disciples of Saint Anthony, looked into the heavens and saw a couch which had been spread with great splendor, and three angels who were carrying three lamps were standing before that couch, and a crown of glory was laid upon it. Having seen all this glorious sight, he said, "This couch can only be for my father Anthony." Then a voice came to him from heaven, saying, "This couch is not for Anthony, your father, but for Thais the harlot." The blessed Paul rose up early in the morning and related the vision, which he had seen. The blessed Saint Bessarion came back from Abby Anthony in great joy, and he went to the religious house of the sisterhood, and he opened the door that he might bring the woman out from the cell in which she was secluded; but she made entreaty to him, saying, "Leave me here until my death, for my sins are many." Then the blessed man said to her, "Behold the merciful God has had compassion upon you, and He has accepted your repentance." Then she wished to go forth from her cell. She answered and said to him, "Believe me, O Father, from the day in which I entered this cell I have made all my sins a mighty burden and I have set it before my eyes, in such a way that as the breath of my nostrils have not separated itself from me, so my sins have not separated themselves from me until this hour."

The blessed Bessarion answered and said to her, "God has not forgiven your sins because of your repentance, but because of the thought which you had that you would deliver yourself over to Christ." This blessed woman Thais lived after her repentance fifteen days, and departed to our Lord in peace. Thus was the crowning of the blessed Thais, who was lost and found, and was dead and came to life by the grace of Christ, to Whom belong mercy, and compassion, and glory, and honor, forever and ever. Amen.

31. Of the Blessed Man Abba Elijah

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN WHOSE NAME WAS ELIJAH who loved the virgins exceedingly, for there are souls which are thus inclined. Having compassion upon the order of virgins and women who lived celibate lives in Thebes, and in the cities which were round about, and in the city of Atrepe, near Akhmim, and possessing many flocks and herds, he built a large nunnery, and he gathered together there every woman who chose to adopt the garb of the nun, and placed them there. With a ready will he took care to provide them with everything which was necessary for them, and he supplied everything required for their well-being, and he also made a garden for them, and he filled their every want with great zeal and care, for our Lords sake. Inasmuch as these women were gathered together from various places, they used to quarrel with each other continually, and because it was right to keep them in order (now he had gathered together about three hundred), he was obliged to take means to pacify them; and he listened to their affairs and arranged the disputes which broke out among them for the space of two years.

This man being young, that is to say being about thirty or forty years old, more or less, was vexed by the passion of lust, and for this reason he departed from that nunnery, and wandered about for two days in the desert, and he made entreaty and supplication to God, saying, "O Lord, either kill me so that I may not see those who are in trouble and may not become afflicted thereby, or remove from me this passion, so that I may be able to provide for the women in everything." When the evening had come he lay down and slept in the desert and, according to what he related, three angels came to him and took hold of him, saying, "Why did you go out from the nunnery?" He related to them the matter and said to them, "I was afraid lest I should do harm not only to them, but also to my own soul." The angels said to him, "If now we make you free from this passion will you go and take care of the women in the nunnery?" Having promised that he would do this they required from him an oath. The oath, which he uttered was as follows; the angels said, "Swear an oath to us," and he said, "I swear by Him Who takes care of me, that I will take care of them." Then having laid hold of him by his hands and his feet, one of them took a razor and mutilated him, not indeed in very truth but only apparently and in a phantomlike manner, and he imagined in the vision that, as one might say, he had been cured of his malady. Then, they asked him, "Do you feel that you have been helped?" He said to them, "I am greatly relieved, and I feel sure that I have been set free from the pain and suffering, and that I have already been delivered there from." The angels said to him, "Depart

and return.” After five days, whilst the women who were in the nunnery were weeping because of what had taken place, because he had forsaken them, and because the care he had taken for their needs had ended, he entered into the monastery in which they were; and he dwelt there from that time on ward in the cells, in a place which was near to them, and according to his power he ordered their lives for them. He lived another forty years, and said to the fathers, “This passion of lust has never since roused itself up in my mind.” This act of grace happened to that holy man because of care, which he exhibited in respect of that nunnery.

32. Of the Blessed Dorotheos

THERE WAS THERE BESIDES THIS MAN ELIJAH, the chosen man Dorotheos, who had grown old there, leading a life of excellent and sublime ascetic rule; and as he did not wish to dwell in the nunnery by the side of the women, as Elijah had done, he shut himself up in a certain upper chamber, but left there a window which faced and looked into the interior of the nunnery; and when he knew that it was proper to do so he used to open it or shut it. He always sat by the window, and he showed the women that he knew everything, which they were doing, and by these means they were rebuked and prevented from quarrelling. Thus he grew old in that upper chamber, and no women ever went up to him, and he was unable to go down to them, for there was no ladder, and in this manner of life he brought his days to an end according to the will of God by the help of His grace.

33. Of the Blessed Pachomius The Great

IN THE REGION OF THE THEBAID, and in the district called Tabenna within the Thebaid, there was a certain blessed man whose name was Pachomius. This man led a beautiful life of ascetic excellence, and was crowned with the love of God and of man. Therefore as this man was sitting in his cell, there appeared to him an angel who said to him, “Since you have completed your discipleship it is unnecessary for you to dwell here. But come, and gather those who are wandering. You will be dwelling with them, and lay down for them such laws as I shall tell to you.” The angel gave him a book in which the following was written:

I. Let every man eat and drink whenever he wishes. According to the strength of those who eat and drink impose work. You shall restrain them neither from eating nor fasting. Furthermore, on those who are strong you shall impose severe labors; and upon those who are of inferior strength and upon those who fast, you shall impose light labors.

II. You shall make for them a cell, and they shall dwell together three by three.

III. They shall partake of food together in one chamber.

IV. They shall not take their sleep lying down, but you shall make for them seats so that when they are sitting down they shall be able to support their heads.

V. At night time they shall put on garments without sleeves, and their loins shall be girded up. They shall be provided with skullcaps. They shall partake of the Offering on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the Week, wearing skullcaps without any nap upon them. Each skullcap shall have in the front of it a cross worked in purple.

VI. You shall establish the monks in four and twenty grades, and to each grade give a letter of the Greek alphabet from Alfa to Taw (i.e. from A to Z); every grade a letter.

The blessed Pachomius performed and fulfilled these things according to the command of the angel. When the head of the monastery asked him that was next to him concerning the affairs of the brethren, the man said to him, "The voice of Alpha and the voice of Beta salute the head of the monastery." Thus the whole of that assembly of brethren had letters of the alphabet assigned to them, according to the designation of the twenty-four letters. To those who were upright and simple he assigned the letter yodh, and to those who were difficult and perverse he assigned the letter ksi (i.e. E), and thus according to the dispositions and according to the habits and rules of life of the orders of monks did he assign letters to them.

The angel commanded that a monk who was a stranger and who had a different garb from theirs should not enter in with them to the table. The man who sought to be accepted as a monk in that monastery was obliged to labor there for three years, after which time, he was permitted to receive the tonsure.

When the monks were eating together they were to cover up their faces with their head coverings that they might not see each other eating. They might not hold conversation together over the table, or gaze about from one side to the other. The angel commanded that during each day they should repeat twelve sections of the Psalter, and during each evening twelve sections of the Psalter, and during each night twelve sections of the Psalter, and that when they came to eat they should repeat the Great Psalm.

The blessed Pachomius said to the angel, "The sections of the Psalter which you have appointed to us for repetition are far too few." The angel said to him, "The sections of the Psalter which I have appointed are indeed few, so that even the monks who are small (i.e. weak) may be able to fulfill the canons, and may not be distressed thereby. For to the perfect no law is laid down, because their mind is always occupied with God. But this law which I have laid down for those who do not have a perfect mind is laid down, so that although they fulfill only such things as are prescribed by the canons they can acquire openness of face." Numerous nuns adhered to this law and canon.

There were living in that mountain about seven thousand brethren, and in the monastery in which the blessed Pachomius himself lived there were one thousand three hundred brethren living there. Besides these, there were also other monasteries, each containing about three hundred, or two hundred, or one hundred monks, who lived together; and they all toiled with their hands and lived thereby, and with whatsoever they possessed which was superfluous for them they provided and fed the nunneries which were there. Each day those whose week of service it was rose up and attended to their work; and others attended to the cooking, and others set out the tables and laid upon them bread, and cheese, and vessels of vinegar and water. There were some monks who went in to partake of food at the third hour of the day, others at the sixth hour, others at the ninth hour, others in the evening, and others ate once a day only. There were some who ate only once a week; and accordingly as each one of them knew the letter, which had been laid upon him, so was his work. Some worked in the Paradise (i.e. the orchard), some in the gardens, some in the blacksmiths shop, some in the bakers shop, some in the carpenters shop, some in the fullers shop, some wove baskets and mats of palm leaves, one was a maker of nets, one was a maker of sandals, and one was a scribe. All these men as they were performing their work were repeating the Psalms and the Scriptures in order.

There were there large numbers of women who were nuns, who closely followed this rule of life. They came from the other side of the river and beyond it. There were also married women who came from the other side of the river

close by. Whenever anyone of them died, the other women would bring her and lay her down on the bank of the river and go away. Then certain brethren would cross over in a boat and bring her over with the singing of psalms, with lighted candles, with great ceremony and honor. When they had brought her over they would lay her in their cemetery; without an elder or deacon. No man could go to that nunnery, and then only from one Sunday to the other (i.e. they could go only on Sundays). It happened that a certain tailor, who was a stranger, came to that nunnery looking for work, and one of the sisters went out to talk with him, and said to him, "We have our own tailor." One of the sisters saw her speaking with him. She held her peace and informed no one with this matter. After a short time, the two women had a dispute about a certain matter, and the sister who had seen the other talking to the tailor went and brought an accusation against the other before all the sisters, talking about her in an evil manner, saying, "This is the Satan who has sown the strife among us." Many of the women having heard these things believed them. The sister, not being able to endure the accusation with which she had been accused without cause, by reason of her distress, went and cast herself into the river and drowned. When the sister who had made the accusation against the other perceived this, seeing that she had calumniated her evilly, that she had caused the sisters pain in a most serious manner, she also secretly drowned herself. The elder who had been made guardian of them, knowing this matter, commanded them that none of the sisters who had believed that sister who had made the accusation against her companion should receive the Offering. He was not reconciled to them and prevented them from participating in the Offering for seven years.

In that same nunnery there was a certain sister who was a virgin. She made herself an object of contempt, and had had a devil in her. The other sisters used to treat her so contemptuously that they would not even allow her to eat with them. The woman herself was well content at this treatment. She would go into the refectory, serve the food and wait upon the whole company there. She became the broom of the whole nunnery; and indeed she made manifest that which is written in the Book of the blessed Apostle. This woman used to throw over her head a roughly cut piece of cloth, whilst the other women wore veils, well cut and well made, according to the rule, which they had. In this garb she used to minister in the refectory, and they would not allow her to sit down with them at the table. Whilst she was eating they never looked at her, and she never touched a whole loaf of bread, but used to eat the broken bits and crusts that fell from the tables. She drank the rinsing of the basins and of the hands, and they sufficed her. She neither reviled anyone of them, nor

murmured, nor spoke superfluous words, though they constantly reviled her, struck her, and thrust her away with harsh words and blows.

At that time the blessed Piterius, that man of wonder, appeared. He dwelt in the region, which was called "Porphyry Mountain." An angel appeared to him and said, "Why do you hold in your mind the proud opinion that you are more excellent in ascetic practices than many? If you wish to see a woman who is more excellent than you, go to the nunnery, which is in Tabenna, and, behold, you shall find there a woman with a roughly cut piece of cloth thrown over her head who is far superior to you in ascetic practices. This woman is far more excellent than you are, for although she ministers as a servant to a great congregation her whole heart is set upon God, whilst as for you, though you dwell here, your mind wanders about in many countries." When the man who had never gone forth from his monastery heard those things, he went quickly to the nunnery, and begged their visitor (or inspector) that he might be allowed to see the nuns. When he had gone inside the house they all came that they might be blessed by the blessed man, Piterius, except the woman who had made herself a creature of contempt did not show herself at all. The blessed man Piterius said to them, "Have all the sisters come, for there is one lacking?" They said to him, "Master, we have one more, but she is a woman of no account, and she is in the refectory." Piterius said to them, "Bring her that I may see her also." They went to bring her, but she did not wish to come, for she felt that the matter of herself would be certainly revealed to him. Since she did not wish to go to the blessed man they dragged her along and brought her to him by force, saying to her, "Saint Piterius wishes to see you." When she had come, the blessed man looked and saw the roughly cut piece of cloth which was thrown over her head, according to the sign which the angel had given concerning her. Then he bowed down before her, and said to her, "Bless me, Mother." She fell down at his feet, saying to him, "Bless me, O Master." When the sisters saw this they were all struck with wonder, and said to him, "Let there be no disgrace to you, master, for she is a creature of no account." Then the blessed man Piterius answered and said, "You yourselves are creatures of contempt, but this woman is your Mother and mine. I entreat God that He will give to me a portion with her in the day of judgment." When all the sisters heard this from the blessed man Piterius, they fell down at her feet, and offered to her regrets for everything, which they had done to her; for some of them used to throw the rinsing of the vessels over her, others used to buffet her, and she endured many insults from them all. So the blessed Piterius prayed over them and left that place. A few days afterwards, because the blessed woman could not endure the honor and the praises of all the sisters, and the penitence

which they showed to her, she went away from that house altogether. No man knows where she went to and where she died.

34. An Apology, Preface and Admonition

THEFORE, O MY BROTHER, IT SUFFICES FOR ME that I have called to mind all these things, and that I have handed them on in writing; for this thing did not happen without the Will of God, because you was moved in your mind to command me to make this compilation and also to hand down in writing an account of the lives and acts of the holy fathers. According to the command of the love of God which is in you, I will write down also the upright lives of holy women who have prospered in the good works of patient endurance, and afterwards I will also write down the account of the stumbling of those who have fallen away from a straight rule of life through the pride which seized upon them, and through the wicked and vain opinion that came upon their souls, and who were tripped up, and stumbled, and fell through their weakness and the war of the Adversary, although not of their own will, for after their fall they triumphed still more gloriously, and acquired rectitude.

I will do this for the benefit of those who are about to meet with this compilation, so that they may set the edifice of their building upon the firm ground of humility with zeal and care, and may fly from pride, and may take refuge in humility; and it shall be my object to write with extreme care concerning the humility of the holy men, and concerning their long-suffering, and concerning their patient endurance, and the questions which they asked each other, together with their answers, and the sundry and diverse things which I shall be able to call to mind concerning the lives of the holy fathers.

O you faithful servant of Christ, having lighted upon this book with pleasure, having derived from it sufficiently a demonstration of the Resurrection, of the lives and labors of the holy fathers, of their patient endurance, being able to grow up in a good hope, and to advance easily in virtues, turn yourself round for once, so that you may see that which is behind you, and seeing my feebleness do you pray for me. Take good heed to guard your soul, even as I know you have been able to do from the time when you held the consular power of Titianus to this day; and again as I found you when you was the prefect and officer of the bed-chamber of the God fearing king. For the man who has such power, and is able to enjoy himself with wealth in abundance, must not forget the fear of God, and must take the greatest care possible to emulate Christ, Who heard from the Calumniator these words; "All these

things will I give to you if you will fall down and worship me.” Therefore take good heed to yourself, and be vigilant, so that you may at all times be exalted over the necks of your secret invisible enemies. Amen.

35. Of the Virgin of Alexandria who Hid Athanasius

THEREFORE IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO REMEMBER also the chosen and mighty women to whom God also gave an equal measure of strength of will as to men, so that they might have no cause for being feeble in the performance of the labor of ascetic excellence. I have seen large numbers of widows who were exceedingly glorious and excellent in the performance of ascetic virtues, and among the chaste virgins whom I saw in Alexandria there was one whom I estimated to be seventy years old, and all the clergy testified concerning her that when a young woman, about twenty years old, she possessed exceeding beauty, and she was more looked at than many women, and because of her beauty she fled lest she should become the cause of stumbling to men.

Once when the Arians were plotting against the blessed Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, and were acting craftily in respect of him that they might do him harm through the prefect Eusebius, and through the wicked men who were his partisans in the days of the Emperor Constantine the Less (i.e. Constantius), and were spreading abroad infamous reports about him, and were accusing him of many things which were unseemly for Christians to do, Athanasius fled that he might not be condemned in their wicked and corrupt hall of judgment, and he told no man, neither kinsmen, nor friends, nor ecclesiastics, nor any other men where he was going. As soon as certain men from among the magistrates had entered into the Episcopal palace suddenly, and began to search for him and to enquire for him, he rose up at midnight, and took his tunic, and fled to this virgin who, being greatly astonished and struck with wonder at the matter, was moved exceedingly. The blessed Athanasius said to her, “Because I am sought for by the Arians, who are making unseemly accusations against me, and because I do not want to spread about an unseemly opinion of myself, and I do not wish to prepare a great punishment for those who would be condemned for my sake, and be made guilty for me, I determined to take myself to flight. God gave me a revelation this night, saying, ‘There is no other person with whom you can find deliverance except this virgin.’”

Therefore because of her exceedingly great joy she removed from herself and set aside all thoughts of shame, and she became wholly the servant of

our Lord. She hid that holy man for the whole period of thirty years, that is to say, until the death of Constantine. She used to wash his feet, prepared everything he had needed, and attended to his bodily wants. Whatever he needed she provided, and she borrowed books and brought them to him. No man in Alexandria knew during that whole period of thirty years where the blessed Athanasius was. When the death of Constantine (i.e. Constantius) was announced, and Athanasius also heard of it, he rose up and came by night. He was suddenly found in the church, and all those who saw him marveled as they gazed carefully at him, for he looked like a man who had risen from the grave. He made an apology to those who truly loved him, and spoke to them, saying, "I did not flee to you, for the reason that there might not be to you an occasion for swearing false oaths. Moreover, because of the search and enquiry, which they were sure to have made for me, I fled to that woman concerning whom no man could suspect of harm, for she is young and beautiful. I have gained two things, my own life and hers; I have helped her in many things, and I have taken care and preserved myself."

36. Of Piamon the Virgin

PIAMON WAS A VIRGIN WHO LIVED ALL HER DAYS with her mother, and she spent her nights in constant vigil, and she ate food at the time of evening, and she labored at the weaving of linen; and she was held to be worthy of the gift of knowing what was going to happen before it happened. It happened on a time that there was in Upper Egypt a certain village which was fighting with another village, for the villages quarreled with each other concerning the division of the waters of the Nile, and they fought so violently that frequently murders were committed, and men were beaten to death. The village which was stronger than the village of this virgin rose up against it in fierce wrath, and there came against the inhabitants of her village a crowd of boastful and violent men carrying staves and spears to kill them; and the angel of the Lord appeared to her, and revealed to her the craft of those who were ready to fall upon them secretly. Then she sent and called the elders of the church of her village, and said to them, "Go out to meet the inhabitants of that village, for behold they are coming against you, lest perhaps you and the village perish; and make entreaty to them that perhaps they may be turned aside from their daring attack, and they may spare the village."

The elders of the village were afraid. They fell down at her feet and made supplication to her, saying, "We do not dare to go out to meet them, for we

are well acquainted with their miserable nature and their arrogance. If you wish to spare the village and your own house, you yourself go out to meet them." The virgin would not undertake to go out, but went up upon the roof, and stood up there in prayer the whole night long, without once kneeling down. She made bowings and entreaties to God, saying, "O Lord, You judge of the earth, Who has no pleasure in whatever is iniquitous. O my Lord, when the prayer and supplication of Your handmaiden reaches You, let Your power transfix the enemy in the spot in which they are." Immediately, on that very day, at a distance of three miles from the village they became fettered and stood still, being unable to move from the spot. It was revealed to them also that they were hindered from moving by the supplication of that woman, and thereupon they sent to the inhabitants of the village, and made peace with them, and became reconciled to them, and they also sent a message to them, saying, "Give grateful thanks to God, for it was the prayers of Piamon which prevented us from coming to you."

37. Of our Blessed Mother Talida

IN THE CITY OF ANTINOE THERE WERE TWELVE NUNNERIES. The women there conducted themselves according to a rule of beautiful spiritual excellence. Here I saw the aged handmaiden of Christ whose name was 'Mother Talida,' who had dwelt in the holy house, according to what she herself and those who were her associates told me, for eighty years. Sixty virgins lived there; they followed the path and rule of the ascetic life in purity, and led a life of happiness under the teaching of this good old woman. They loved that woman and depended on her. Because of the great affection which they poured out on her, the key was never taken away from any one of them, as is customary in other religious houses for women. Through her divine doctrine she changed them into a state of incorruptibility. This old woman arrived at a state of impassibility. When I entered in her presence and sat down by her side, she stretched out her hands and laid them on my shoulders, in the boldness and freedom, which she had acquired in Christ.

38. Of the Virgin Taor

IN THIS NUNNERY THERE WAS A CERTAIN VIRGIN whose name was Taor, who was the disciple of a certain old woman of ascetic excellence, and who had

lived there for thirty years. She would not consent to receive neither beautiful apparel, a veil, nor sandals, saying, "I do not require them, for I am not compelled to go down into the market." Every First Day of the Week the other women used to go down to the church to partake of the Offering, but this virgin used to remain by herself in the nunnery dressed in rags, and she would sit at her work at all hours. By these means she acquired such a sagacious, wise, and ready appearance that every man who was accustomed to abhor the sight of women would have been near to being snared and falling at the sight of her, had it not been that shamefacedness, which is the guardian of chastity, was ever with her, and that she ordered her gaze in a chaste manner by means of shame and fear.

39. Of the Virgin and the Martyr Colluthus

THERE WAS ANOTHER VIRGIN there who was a neighbor of mine, and who dwelt near me, but whose face I had never seen, for, according to what they said about her, she had never gone down to the market from the day upon which she had become a nun, but had completed sixty years with the head of her nunnery. And finally, when she was about to depart from the world, the martyr, whose name was Colluthus, who had lived by the side of the nunnery, appeared to her, and said to her, "This day you are about to depart from this world to your Lord, and you shall see all the saints. But come and eat a meal with us in the martyrrium." Thereupon she rose up early in the morning and arrayed herself in her apparel, taking bread, olives, and garden herbs in her basket; she went forth as she had done for many years. Having gone to the martyrrium, she prayed. Having watched for the space of the whole day for an opportunity when no man would be found there, she drew near and cried out to that martyr, and said to him, "Ask a blessing on my food, O Saint Colluthus, and accompany me on this my journey by your prayers."

Having eaten her food and prayed, she came back at sunset to her nunnery, and gave to the Head of the nunnery the Book of Clement which is called "Stromata." It contains a commentary of Amos the prophet, saying, "Give this book to the Bishop who is in Alexandria in exile, and say to him, 'Pray for me, for I am about to depart.'" She died in the night without suffering either sickness or from pain in her head. But she rolled herself up in her garments and died.

40. Of the Virgin and of Magistrinus

IN THE ANCIENT BOOK ASCRIBED TO HIPPOLYTUS, who knew the Apostles, I have found the following history written. There was a certain woman who was of noble birth and beautiful in her face. She came from the city of the Corinthians, and continued to live in a state of virginity. Certain people laid an accusation against her before the governor, who was a heathen, at the time of the persecution of the Christians, and calumniated her, saying, "She has abused the Government and the Emperors, she has uttered blasphemies against the gods (i.e. the idols), she has treated the sacrifices with contempt." Such were the lying words, which the wicked men concocted about her, because they had been led captive by her beauty. Because the governor was more addicted than they all to lasciviousness, he accepted such calumnies as those, and became mad with desire like lustful stallions, even as it is written, "He was inflamed by lust."

The Governor tried to seduce her by means of cunning schemes of every kind, but was unable to do so. He became furious with her and handed her over to be punished, not by means of stripes and scourging, but wanted to make her earn her living by fornication. He commanded the man to whom he had delivered her to collect daily from the money which should be paid to her for hire three darics and to bring them to him. This man, in order that he might not make use of the command in any sluggish manner, and that he might not lose money and also make the governor exceedingly angry, set her up as a gift before all those who wished to have her. Therefore, when those who were as keen in their lust for the maiden as are hawks for a snared sparrow perceived those things, they went into the tavern of destruction (i.e. brothel), and having given money to the man to whom the virgin had been delivered, they drew near to her and spoke to her such things as they thought would be helpful to their intentions. But the virgin, who was wise among women, urged them on with blandishments in a gladsome manner, and strengthened her mind in the hope of Him for whom she had guarded her virginity, and she made petitions to them, saying, "I have a hidden sore in a certain place, and the smell of its running is exceedingly strong; and I am afraid that after you have embraced me it will bring you to hate me and that your souls will loathe me. I therefore beseech you to wait a few days until I am well again, and then you shall have the power to do whatever you like with me for nothing."

Having dismissed them with these words, she offered up to God during those days with her whole heart prayers, and supplications, and bowings to the ground that He would help her, and that she might be saved and delivered

from such hateful destruction as this, and that she might be kept in a state of unsullied virginity. Then God seeing her chastity sent a fervent longing for her into a certain young man called Magistrrianus, who was wholly excellent, both in mind and in body, and it burned like fire even to death. And he went as it were in a lustful passion, and at the time of evening he entered the house of the man who had been commanded to receive the money, and he gave him five darics, and said to him, "Let me be with the virgin this night"; and he permitted him to be with her. Then having gone into the place which was her sleeping room, he said to her, "Rise up and save yourself." Having stripped off her apparel, and dressed her in his own clothes, and covered her with his cloak, and completed her attire after the manner of that of a man, he said to her, "Muffle up your head in the hood of the cloak, and go out. Having done this she signed herself with the sign of the Cross, and went out. At the turn of the day the fraud became known, and Magistrrianus was delivered up and was cast to the beasts. Thus was the evil put to shame because that martyr, who is worthy of admiration, was able to crown himself with the two crowns of a double martyrdom, one on behalf of himself, and one on behalf of that blessed woman.

41. Of the Holy Woman Melania The Great

MELANIA, THE HOLY WOMAN IS WORTHY OF ALL BLESSINGS. She was of Spanish origin, and grew up in Rome, for she was the daughter of Marcellinus, a man who had held consular rank. Her husband was a man who performed a large number of duties under the Government, and she became a widow when she was twenty-two years old. Now this woman, having been held worthy to be seized upon by divine love, revealed the matter to no man, for she would not have been permitted to perform her own will, because she lived in the time of the rule of Valens (A.D. 364-378); and having arranged that he should be named the procurator of her sons affairs, she took everything which she possessed which could be easily moved and carried off, and placed it in a ship with tried servants, both men and women, and sailed hastily to Alexandria, where she sold her property and changed it into gold. She went into the mount of Nitria, and saw the fathers, that is to say, Pambo, Arsenius, Serapion the Great, Paphnutius of Scete, Isidore the Confessor and Bishop of Hermopolis, and Dioscurus. She remained with them for half a year, and going around through the entire desert, saw all the holy men and was blessed by them. When Augustus, who was in Alexandria, sent into exile to Palestine

and Caesarea, Isidore, Pissimius, Adelphius, Fisanis, Paphnutius, and Pambo (now with these also was Ammonius, that is to say, twelve holy bishops), this blessed woman clave to them, and ministered them from her own possessions. When the servants whom she used to send to them were stopped, this brave woman (according to what the holy men Pisanis, Paphnutius, Isidore, and Ammonius related to me, for I used to hold converse with them) used to clothe herself in the garment of one of her servants, and carry to them late in the evening the food which they needed.

When the Governor of Palestine learned this thing, wishing to fill his purse, and hoping and expecting to make profit by her, he seized her and cast her into prison. The Governor was unaware that she was a noble rank woman. Then she sent to him a message, saying, "I am the daughter of such and such a man, and the wife of such and such a man, and I am the handmaiden of Christ. Do not treat lightly my poor garb and estate, for I have the power to exalt myself if it pleases me to do so, and you have no authority either to hamper me in this fashion or to carry off any of my property. In order that you may not dare to do anything in ignorance, and fall under condemnation, behold, I send you this message; for it is right that towards senseless and foolish men we should act in a masterful manner, and with pride, even as our noble rank enables us to do, and should treat them as fools and men of no understanding." When the Governor learned this thing he apologized to Melania, entreated her to forgive him, fell down and did homage to her, and gave orders that she should have the power to visit holy men without hindrance.

After the return of these blessed men from exile, this holy woman built a house in Jerusalem, in which she dwelt for twenty-seven years, and in which she had a congregation of sisters, who were in number about fifty; and moreover, the honorable nobleman Rufinus, who came from Italy and belonged to the city of Aquileia, clave to her whole life long, and he led a life of glorious works, and finally he was held to be worthy of the office of elder. Now among men one would not quickly find one who was more understanding, and gracious, and pleasant than he. Rufinus and Melania during the whole of that period of twenty-seven years received and relieved at their own expense all those people who came to Jerusalem to pray, bishops, dwellers in monasteries, and virgins. They edified and benefited all those who thronged to them. They healed the schism of the Paulinists, who were in number about four hundred monks, and they all were heretics who fought against the Holy Spirit; and having made entreaty to them they turned them back to union with the Church. They loaded with their gifts all the clergy who were in the cities. They provided with food all those who were strangers and needy. In this manner they ended their

lives, and never became a stumbling block to any man.

As concerning the possessions of which she stripped herself, and the things (i.e. money) which she distributed, being hot as fire with divine zeal, and blazing like a flame with the love of Christ, I alone am not able to recount, for it belongs also to those who dwell in the country of the Persians to declare it. There was no man who was deprived of her alms and gifts whether he came from the east, the west, the north, or the south. She lived in exile for thirty-seven years, and her possessions sufficed for her to give alms to churches, to religious houses, to strangers, and to those who were in prison. Meanwhile her relatives and her kinsfolk were sending money to her continually, to her own son, and those who had charge of her property also sent some of their own money to her; and she never lacked anything, and during the whole of the time in which she was in exile she never consented to the acquisition of a span of land. She was never drawn to long for her son, and the love for her only child neither parted her nor divided her from the love of Christ, but through her prayers her son attained to perfect discipline and to the ways and habits of excellence. He became the son-in-law of honorable and noble people, and there also came upon him much power and diverse positions of great honor; now he had two children, one boy and one girl.

After a long period of time had elapsed, when she heard that the daughter of her son and her husband wished to be sanctified, and fearing lest they should fall into the hands of the heretics who would sow in them evil doctrines, and lest they should grow up in a life of dissolute luxury, that old woman, who was then sixty years old, embarked once again in a ship, and sailed from Caesarea, and after twenty days arrived in Rome. Whilst she was there she converted and made to become a Christian a man called Apronianus, who was of exceedingly high rank and was also a pagan; and she moreover persuaded him by means of most perfect admonition and exhortation to become sanctified, and also his wife, who was her own sister and whose name was Avita, to receive the garb of the followers of the ascetic life, and to become prosperous in all patience in the labors of the life of abstinence and self-denial. She also strengthened by means of her excellent counsels the daughter of her son, whose name was Melania, and her husband, whose name was Pinianus, and she also converted her daughter-in-law, whose name was Albina; and she persuaded all these to sell everything which they possessed and to give the money to the poor; and she brought them out from Rome, and led them into the quiet and peaceful haven of the life and labors of asceticism.

She contended with all the women of senatorial rank and with the women of high degree, and strove with them as with savage wild beasts, for the men

tried to restrain her from making the women do even as she had done, that is to say, to prevent her from converting them and making them to forsake their worldly rank and position. She spoke to them saying, "My children, four hundred years ago it was written that that time was the last time. Why do you hold fast thus strenuously to the vain love of the world? Take heed lest the day of Antichrist overtakes you, and keep not fast hold upon your own riches and the possessions of your fathers"; and having set free all these she brought them to the life of the ascetic and recluse. As for her grand son Publicola, who was a child, she converted him and brought him to Sicily; and she sold the whole of the residue of her possessions and taking the price of it came to Jerusalem, and, having distributed it in a wise fashion and arranged all her other affairs, after forty days she died at a good old age, being crowned with an abundance of gratification and happiness; and she left in Jerusalem a house for religious folk and money for the maintenance of it.

When all those who clave to her had gone forth from Rome, the great barbarian whirlwind, which had also been mentioned in ancient prophecies, came upon the city, and it did not leave behind it even the statues of brass which were in the market-places, for it destroyed by its barbaric insolence everything whatsoever; and it so thoroughly committed everything to destruction that the city of Rome, which had been crowned and adorned for twelve hundred years with edifices and buildings of beauty, became a waste place. Then those who without contention had been converted by means of her admonition, ascribed glory to God Who, by means of a change in temporal affairs, had persuaded those who did not believe her; for whilst the houses of all the latter were plundered, the houses of those only who had been persuaded by her were delivered, and they became perfect burnt-offerings to the Lord, through the care and solicitude of the blessed woman Melania.

It happened by chance that I and they once travelled together from Aelia to Egypt, and we were accompanying on our journey the gentle virgin Sylvania, the sister of Rufinus, a man of consular rank, and Jovinianus was also with us; now he was at that time a deacon, but subsequently he became bishop in the Church of God of the city of Askelon, and he was a God-fearing man and was exceedingly well versed in doctrine. And it came to pass that a fierce and fiery heat overtook us on the way, and we came into Pelusium that we might rest therein; and Jovinianus, who is worthy of admiration, came by chance upon a trough for washing, and he began to wash his hands and his feet in a little water that by means of the coolness of it he might refresh himself after the intensity of the blazing heat. Then having washed himself he threw on the ground a sheepskin upon which he might rest from the labor of the

journey. And behold, the mighty one among women stood up over him like a wise mother, and in her simplicity rebuked him by her words, saying, "Seeing that you are still in the heat of youth how can you have confidence that by means of carefulness on your part you will be able to resist the natural heat of the constitution of the body which still burn in your members? Do you not perceive the injurious effects which will be produced in you by this washing? Believe me, O my son, for I am this day a woman sixty years old; from the time when I first took upon myself this garb water has never touched more of my body than the tips of the fingers of my hands, and I have never washed my feet, or my face, or any one of my members. Although I have fallen into many sicknesses, and have been urged by the physicians, I have never consented nor submitted myself to the habit of applying water to any part of my body; and I have never lain upon a bed, and I have never gone on a journey to any place reclining on a cushioned litter."

This wise and blessed woman loved learning, and turned her nights into days in reading all the books of the famous Fathers, I mean to say the works of the blessed Gregory, of the holy man Stephen, of Pierius, of Basil also, and of other writers, more than two hundred and fifty thousand sayings; and she did not read them in an ordinary fashion or just as she came to them, and she did not hurry over them in an easy and pleasant manner, but with great labor and with understanding she used to read each book seven, or eight times. Because of this she was enabled, being set free from lying doctrine, to fly by means of the gift of learning to great opinions, and she made herself a spiritual bird, and in this way was taken up to Christ her Lord. May He in His mercy grant to us through her prayers the power to almighty, even as she did, and may we see her with all the saints who love Him, and with them may we lift up praise to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit forever and ever.

42. Of the Blessed Woman Melania the Younger

INASMUCH AS I HAVE ALREADY PROMISED ABOVE to relate the history of Melania the Younger it is right that I should pay my obligation, for it is not just that I should consign to oblivion a young woman who, though so very young in her years, by reason of her indefatigable zeal and knowledge was very much wiser than the old women, or that I should omit to make manifest by words the history of one who, though a girl in stature, was old in the mind of the fear of God.

Therefore the parents of this maiden drew her by force into marriage, and

they united her to one of the nobles of Rome, but she kept in mind continually the words which had been spoken to her by her aged relative, and kept herself as was fitting, and became strengthened especially in the fear of God. And she had two sons, and as both of them died she came to be possessed of such a hatred of marriage that she said to her husband, whose name was Pinianus, the son of Severus, a man of consular rank, "If you wish to live with me a life of purity I will regard you as the husband and lord of my life; but if, inasmuch as you are a young man, this is too hard for you, take everything which I have and leave only free to me my own body, for in this way I shall be able to fulfill my desire which is in God, and I shall become the heir of the excellences of that woman after whose name I have been called. For if God desired me to lead the life of this world He would never have taken away the children to whom I gave birth."

When they had been for a long time debating the matter, at length God had mercy upon that young man, and He placed in him the zeal of the fear of God to such a degree that he also sought to be excused from all the material things of this world, and thus was to fulfill the word which had been spoken by the Apostle, saying, "How know you, O woman, whether you shall give life to your husband or not? Or how know you, O man, whether you shall give life to your wife or not?" When she was married to her husband she was about twelve or thirteen years old, and she lived with him for seven years, for she was twenty years of age when she withdrew from the world. First of all she bestowed all her raiment of silk upon the holy altars, which also did Olympias, the handmaiden of Christ, and the remainder of her apparel of silk she cut up, and made it suitable for the service of the church in other ways. Her silver and gold she entrusted to an elder whose name was Paul, who was a monk from Dalmatia, and she sent it by sea to the countries of the East, I mean to Egypt and to the Thebaid, to the amount of ten thousand darics; and she sent in this manner ten thousand darics to Antioch, and to the countries which were near there, but to Palestine she sent fifteen thousand darics. To the churches which were in the islands, and to the people who were in exile she sent ten thousand darics, and to those who were in the West, I mean in the churches, and in the monasteries there, and the houses for the reception of strangers, and to all those who were in want she distributed her gifts with her own hands.

I speak as before God when I say that she must have given away four times these amounts besides, and that she snatched away her money from Alaricus her confidential servant as from the mouth of a lion. Of those who wished to be free among her servants she gave freedom to about eight thousand in number, and on the remainder who had no wish to have their freedom, and

who preferred rather to remain in the service of her brother, she bestowed three thousand darics. All the villages which she had in Spain, and in Aquitania, and in the island of Tarragon, and Gaul she sold, as well as those which she had in Sicily, and in Campania, and in Africa, and received the proceeds of it in her own hands, so that she might give them to the monasteries, and churches, and all those who were in want. Such was the wisdom of Melania, this lover of Christ, and such was the mature and divine opinion which she adopted in respect of the weighty burden of these riches.

Her manner of life was thus. She herself ate once a day, though at the beginning she ate once in five days, and the young women whom she had converted and who lived with her, she commanded to partake of food every day. And there lived with her also the mother of Albins, who observed the same rule of life, and who distributed her possessions among the needy after the manner of Melania; and sometimes they dwelt in the plains of Sicily, and sometimes in the plains of Campania, and they had with them fifteen men who were eunuchs, and a proportionate number of virgins who ministered as servants. And Pinianus, who had once been her husband, was now one who helped in the work of ascetic excellence, and was her associate, and he dwelt with three hundred men who were monks and read the Holy Scriptures, and he enjoyed himself in the garden, and conversed with the people. Now these men who were with him helped and relieved us in no slight degree, and we were very many in number, when we were going on our way to Rome on behalf of the blessed man John the Bishop, for they received us with the greatest good will and they supplied us with provisions for the way in great abundance, and they sent us on our way in joy and gladness.

Their kinsman, whose name was Pammachius, a man of consular rank, withdrew from the world as did they, and he lived a life which was pleasing to God, and during his lifetime he distributed his possessions among the needy, and left them to them after his death; and thus he departed to our Lord. In like manner the man Macarius, and Constantinus, who was the assessor to the prefects in Italy (now they were well known men and men who merit mention), arrived at the highest pitch of ascetic excellence which I describe even as it is; and they abide in the body at this present and lead a life of glorious and divine deeds, and are awaiting the perfect life which is full of happiness.

43. Of the Blessed Woman Olympias

THE HOLY AND CHASTE WOMAN OLYMPIAS, whilst journeying in the footsteps of this woman Melania, was emulating her in the excellence of her divine life and labors, and she was seized with a fervent desire of travelling in the path which leads to heaven, and in every respect she made herself cling close to the Divine Books. This woman was in the flesh the daughter of Count Seleucus, but, if we say what is true, in the spirit she was the daughter of God. She was the daughter of the son of Ablavius, a man who had held consular rank in Constantinople, and she was for a few days the daughter-in-law of Nebridius, the sub-prefect of Constantinople, but in truth she was not the wife of the man, for they say concerning her that she died in purity and in her virginity, and that she only lived according to the Divine Word in chastity, in which was mingled true humility, and that she made herself a friend of and ministered to all those who were needy.

Her abundant riches sufficed for this work, and it is impossible to reckon up that which she used to distribute to everyone with a sincere intent; for there is not a city, or a district, or a desert place, or an island, or a shore which did not enjoy the gifts of this glorious woman. She gave gifts also to the churches for their maintenance and to the houses in which strangers were received, and also to the prisons and, moreover, to those who were in exile, and, so to speak, on the whole world this blessed woman scattered her alms broadcast. And she leaped upon and ascended the uppermost part of the lofty mountain of humility, in which nothing whatsoever was to be seen of the acts and deeds of vainglory or of deceitful action, but the life of simplicity, and the common garb, and the emaciated body, and the submissive mind, and the understanding which is without arrogance, and the lowly heart, and the watching of vigil, and the spirit which is without anxious care, and the love which has no limit, and friendship without end and the holding in contempt the operation of the feelings, and the restraint from everything harmful, and the mind which is simple towards God, and the hope which never fail, and the loving kindness which is unspeakable, and the thoughtful care of all poor folk.

This woman suffered many temptations through the agency of that evil devil, who loves hateful things and who has never had experience of things which are good, and she endured great contendings for the sake of the name of Christ. And she gave herself to tears which were without measure both by day and by night, and she submitted herself to all sorts and conditions of the children of men for the sake of God, and she bowed down reverently before the holy Bishops, and she paid homage to the elders, and she entreated in an

honorable manner the clergy, as well as the orders of monks who dwelt in the monastic houses, and she received with welcome the virgins, and she visited the widows, and she reared the orphans, and she strengthened those who were in a state of old age, and she had care for the sick and she mourned with the sinners, and she led the erring into the right path, and she tended every one, and she converted many women among those who did not believe, and prepared them for life. She left behind her to the world a beautiful remembrance, and she changed the slavery into freedom of all the members of her household, who were about a myriad in number, and she showed to them honor in the same degree as to her noble family; and if, as is right, we must tell the truth, she made them to become of more account than herself.

It was impossible for any man to see apparel worse than hers on anyone, for the garments of this brave woman were not as good as those of the people who cover themselves with the oldest rags; and the food which she offered to her body was of such an inferior class that on account of its poorness it was rejected even by her servants. By this woman who was clothed in Christ, no blame was ever found in anyone, not even in her neighbors, all through her life—which was not a life-by reason of the repentance and in the vehement tears with which she burned; one may perhaps see a fountain which, owing to the violence of the heat, has dried up, but no man ever saw the eyes of this woman, which were fixed upon Christ, lacking tears. But of what use is it for us to tell and to devote myself so strenuously to narrate things concerning her?

For the contendings of this woman, who was perfect in excellence, were so exceedingly numerous that they were more in number than those which were declared concerning her, and men would only imagine concerning me that I was narrating from hearsay great things which were not true about this woman Olympias, who became a vessel of honor of the Divine Spirit, and who was above all passions. Nevertheless I was a spectator of her excellence and of her angelic acts and deeds, and I was, as it were, a member of her household, and her kinsman in the Spirit, and she made, by my counsel, gifts to many from her possessions. And this woman who never thought about the things which were in the flesh, suffered many vain calumnies for the sake of the truth, and those who were living in Divine fear in Constantinople rightly deemed that she should be numbered with the confessors, because even to the death she persisted in striving for righteousness sake, and in performing her works she received perfection, and she waited hopefully for the never-withering crown, which was full of all blessings in the everlasting mansions on high, with all the saints who were like to her, and she sought after the reward of her good deeds with freedom of speech.

44. Of the Blessed Woman Candida

AFTER THE MANNER OF THE BLESSED WOMAN CANDIDA, the daughter of the blessed man Trajan, the general, also labored, and she arrived at the perfection of ascetic excellence; and she offered to the Bishops, who were the ministers of the Mysteries of Christ, the homage which was right for them, and she provided suitably for the performance of all the service of the church, and supplied the clergy with gifts, to each man according to his grade. She converted her daughter and placed her in the ranks of the virgins, and she offered to God this gift of the fruit of her womb, and sent her before her, and finally she herself also became like to her daughter in the chastity of her purity, and she distributed her wealth among the poor and needy. I know that night after night this brave woman used to rise up from her bed and grind corn, and heat the oven, and make bread for the Offering, and bake it with her own hands, and she was accustomed to say that she did this in order to reduce the strength of her body, for, she added, "Because I am unable to receive any benefit from fasting I have taken upon myself this labor for watching, so that I may do away with the greedy appetite of Esau."

She separated herself from every kind of meat where there is blood, fish alone excepted and she made use of oil and vegetables, but these only on festival days; and on all other days she used to live on dry bread dipped in vinegar, and it sufficed her. She awaited with hope the Resurrection which was to be full of happiness, in return for these stern labors, and she hoped to enjoy the everlasting delights which God has prepared for those who love Him.

45. Of the Blessed Woman Gelasia

GELASIA, THE DAUGHTER OF A MAN OF THE RANK OF TRIBUNE, desired earnestly to follow in the fear of God after this woman whose life and deeds were glorious, and her excellence consisted in never allowing the sun to go down upon her wrath against man, neither against her servants nor against any other man; and this blessed woman fled from the path of men of wrath which leads to everlasting death.

46. Of the Blessed Woman Juliana

AGAIN, THERE WAS A CERTAIN VIRGIN, whose name was Juliana, in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and it was said concerning her that she was a believing woman, and a woman of understanding, and that in the time of the persecution when the writer Origen was fleeing from the heathen she received him and hid him in her house for two years; and she fed and kept him at her own expense, and made him to be satisfied and content with her ministration. Now I have found these things set down in a certain book which was in the handwriting of Origen himself, and I found this book in the possession of the excellent virgin Juliana in Caesarea who had hidden it, and who used to say that she received it from Symmachus, the expositor of the Jews. And I have not set down in writing the story of the excellences of these glorious women for any ordinary purpose, but that we may learn that by every means whatsoever we may, if we wish, find sundry and diverse occasions for obtaining spiritual advantage.

47. Of Heronion and His Wife Bosphoria

IN ANCYRA, A CITY OF GALATIA, I met a man whose name was Heronion, an "Apakomots," and an enlightened man, and his wife whose name was Bosphoria (or Dosphoria), and of their mode of living and acts I experienced an example. Now these folk had such a firm hope in the happiness which were to come, that they neglected even their children, for they awaited with hope the actual fulfillment of the things to come, and they distributed among the poor and needy the income which they derived from their villages, notwithstanding the fact that they had four male and two female children. To these children they never gave anything whatsoever, except to the daughters who had married husbands. Finally, they used to say, "After we are dead everything will be yours, but during our lifetime the income which we derive from our villages we shall take for ourselves." They used to divide their moneys among the churches and monasteries, and houses for the receiving of strangers and among the poor and needy. Besides these things they performed the following act of excellence.

There was a great famine, and every man restrained his mercy, but these folk opened the storehouses which they had in their villages, and gave food to eat to those who were famished, and through this act the heretics who were living in that country were changed and were turned to the true knowledge when they saw their unspeakable loving kindness; and they gave praise to God for the simplicity of their faith. Other examples of their excellence were

the following; the modest garb, common and simple apparel, food eaten but rarely, and then only in such quantity as were sufficient to maintain life; and they lived meanwhile in a state of chastity which was acceptable to God. They dwelt in the fields several days at a time, loving a life of silent contemplation, and they fled from the tumult of cities and from the evils which are begotten of them, lest when they were living among a crowd of people something might come upon them to disturb them, and they might fall from their divine state of mind. For this reason these blessed men were doing all these excellent things, because that with the eyes of the understanding they had already looked upon the good things which had been forever prepared for them.

48. Of the Blessed Woman Magna

IN THIS CITY OF ANCYRA THERE WERE ALSO MANY OTHER VIRGINS who led lives of ascetic excellence, and they were two thousand, or more, in number; and they kept themselves in restraint and served God with great humility. And among them were also famous women who triumphed with glorious strenuousness in the contending of the fear of God, and of those was Magna, the chaste and proved wife; now I know not whether I ought to describe her as a virgin or as a widow, for this woman, owing to the pressure which was put upon her by her mother, was yoked to a husband. But she used to make pretences to her husband in diverse ways, and she avoided his embraces by urging the bodily sickness which she had on her as an excuse, and thus she was, according to what the members of her household said, preserved spotless from him. Now, after a short time the man died, and he left everything to her. She offered herself wholly to God and devoted herself to the things which belonged to the life which is to come; and thus she lived a life in the great chastity of the fear of God, and even the Bishops were put to shame by the sight of her. The rest of the building (i.e., the edifice of her spiritual excellences,) she made perfect in the furnace of the love of voluntary poverty, and whatsoever there remained to her she gave, as it is written, gladly to the churches, and monasteries and houses for receiving poor strangers, and to the orphans and widows; and she abode continually in the church and served God, and awaited the hope which was to come.

49. Of the Monk Misericors who Lived in Ancyra

MOREOVER, WE FOUND IN THIS CITY A CERTAIN MONK, and we met him at the time when he had just received the laying on of hands as an elder; formerly he had been a husbandman, but he had labored in the life of a solitary recluse for twenty years, and he had lived in close intercourse with the Bishop of the city, who was a holy man. He was such a benevolent man that even in the night time he would go roundabout and visit those who were poor and needy, and he was so indefatigable in his work that he neglected neither the prison-house, nor the house of the sick (i.e. hospital), nor the houses of the rich and poor, but helped every one. He urged the rich with words which were full of mercy, and exhorted them to fair deeds, and he toiled with anxious care on behalf of the poor and needy, in respect of those things which were right for them. Those who were struggling in contention he brought near to peace, and those who were naked he clothed with raiment, and he labored for the sick and brought them the bindings up which conduced to their healing.

Now there existed in this city of Ancyra that which exists rightly in large cities, that is to say, in the porch of the church of it there lay a great number of poor folk, who were in the habit of going about begging for their daily bread, and among them were certain men who had wives; and it fell out on the night of a certain day that one of these women was about to give birth to a child. Because the pain was darting through her, and the severe anguish of the birth pangs, she cried out loudly. The blessed man heard her outcries from the church as he was praying. He ceased praying, and went out to see what was happening, although it was winter. Seeing that there was no man near to her in her necessity, he himself filled the place of midwife, and did not consider the shame which attaches to those who give birth to children; for the great act of loving kindness which he was about to perform did not grant to him the perception of such things.

Of this blessed man the garments were so utterly poor that they were worth nothing at all, for by reason of the great and loving kindness, which dwelt in him he took no pains at all to acquire any possession whatever. For if anyone gave him a book he immediately went and sold it. To those who enquired of him concerning it, saying, "Why did you sell the book?" He said, "How am I to persuade the Master that I have in truth learned His handicraft, unless I make use of His testimony as to the true meaning of His handicraft?" This holy man persists in this course of action until this day, and has left behind him to all those who dwell in that country a never fading remembrance. He is happy in the expectation of the good things, which are eternal. He waits to receive the

reward of the labors of his triumphs in the kingdom from Him Who said, "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat. I was naked and you clothed Me."

50. Of John of Lycus, a City on the Thebaid

JOHN, WHO LIVED IN THE CITY OF LYCUS, and who had learned in his youth the craft of the carpenter, and whose brother was a dyer, afterwards, when he was about twenty five years old, took upon himself the garb of monkhood; and having lived in diverse monasteries for five years, he finally departed by himself to the mountain which is in Lycus, to the lofty eminence which is on the top of the mountain, and made three cells for himself there. Now he built and prepared these for himself in the first year after he went to the mountain and went up into it. The first cell was for the needs of the body, in the second he labored at the work of his hands and took his food, and in the third he said his prayers, and during the three (or thirty) years in which he was in seclusion there he was accustomed to receive whatsoever was necessary for him through the window from him that ministered to him.

This blessed man was worthy to receive from God the gift of being able to declare things before they came to pass, and on several occasions he made known things before they happened to the blessed Emperor Theodosius, I mean he foretold that he would conquer Maximus the rebel and would return from Gallia, and he also announced to him beforehand concerning the defeat of Eugenius the rebel, and thus the fame of this holy man went forth greatly, and he was held to be a man of spiritual excellence. Therefore when we were in the desert of Nitria, I and the members of the following of the blessed Origen wished to gain exact information concerning the state of spiritual excellence to which the man had attained. Thereupon the blessed Evagrius said, "I am very desirous of learning from someone who is skilled in the investigation of the mind and understanding what manner of man John of Lycus is; for although I myself am unable to see him, still I can learn from another man concerning his qualities of excellence if he be able to narrate them, but I cannot go so far as his mountain."

When I had heard these things I said nothing whatsoever to any man, and I held my peace for a day, but on the next day I shut up my cell, and having confided myself to the hands of God I set out on my journey to go to the Thebaid, where I arrived after eighteen days, on some of which I walked on my feet, and on others I sailed on the river. For it was the period of the year when the river rises, and when many folk fall sick, which also happened to me. And

when I had gone to John of Lycus I found that he had shut himself up in the place in which he lived in seclusion, and I took up my abode with the brethren in a great house which contained about one hundred men, and which the brethren had built a long time; for though they shut in John during the other days of the week on Saturday and Sunday they used to open his window.

When therefore I had learned the rule concerning his seclusion, I waited until the Saturday, and at the second hour I drew near and found him sitting in the opening in the wall, in which he waited to administer comfort and consolation to those who thronged to him. And having saluted me he said to me through an interpreter, "Where are you from, my son? Why have you come? You appear to me to belong to the congregation of Evagrius." And I said to him, "I am a stranger from the country of the Galatians." I confessed that I also belonged to those who were the followers of Evagrius. Now whilst we were conversing together behold, Alipius, the governor of the country, came to him, and as the governor turned to him John ceased to talk to me and I left them for a little space and gave them opportunity to talk, and I rose up and departed from the mountain. When they had passed much time in their converse I became impatient and angry, and I murmured against that excellent old man because it seemed as if he had treated me lightly and had paid honor to the governor; and being offended in my mind at this treatment I made up my mind to go away because of his disregard of me. Then John called to his interpreter, whose name was Theodore, and said to him, "Go and say to that brother, be not angry and impatient, for I will dismiss the governor immediately, and then I will speak with you." Thus it appeared to me that, like a spiritual being, he had knowledge of secret things, and I made up my mind to remain.

When the governor had departed John called to me and said to me, "My son, why were you vexed with me? What have you found which is worthy of being considered an offence? You have imagined things which are not to be found in me, and which are not creditable to yourself. Do you not know that it is written, 'Those that are whole have no need of a physician.' Only those who are in very evil case have need of him. You, I can find whenever I wish, and if I myself do not comfort you the brethren and the other fathers will do so. But this governor who has come to us is tightly bound to the Calumniator by means of the affairs of this world, and, having obtained respite for a brief space from the vain labor of his abominable servitude, he flees like a slave from his master and comes to be helped; therefore it would not be seemly to leave him, and to be constant in attention to you, for you are at all seasons occupied with the cultivating of your life."

Having said these things I entreated him to forgive me, and I became certain in my mind that he was a spiritual man. Then with a smile he patted my left cheek with his right hand, and said to me, "Many temptations will rise up for you to endure, and moreover, for many years past you have struggled to go forth from the desert, and you struggle even to this day, but you have been afraid; and the causes of it, which were thought by you to arise from the fear of God, has the evil himself sowed in your mind; and although you drove away your thought from you, you have kept him with you. For he sowed in you the thought of desire, which was also pleasant to you, that is to say, you did care greatly to bring out of the world your father and also your sister that they might take upon themselves the garb of the monastic life. There still remain to your father seven other years of life, therefore continue to abide in the desert, and do not on account of these thoughts desire to go to your kinsfolk, for it is written, 'No man who has put his hand on the ploughshare and looks back is useful to the kingdom of heaven.'"

Therefore, being helped by these words whereby I triumphed I gave thanks and praise to God Who had quieted and laid to rest in me the cause which was urging me to go forth from the desert. Then afterwards he said to me with a smile, "Do you wish to become a bishop?" I said to him, "I have already been made one"; and he said to me, "Where?" Then I answered and said to him, "I am the bishop of the public eating-houses, and of the taverns, and of tables, and of wine-pots, for I am a visitor of them. If the wine has gone sour I know enough to observe it, and that which is fit to drink, I drink. Similarly I visit the cooking pot and if it needs salt, or any seasoning whatsoever, I season it with sauces and then I eat of it. For this, that is to say, my visiting, is my episcopate, and it is the love of the belly and gluttony which has made me the visitor of these." And with a smile he said to me further, "Quit these words of jesting, bishophood must call you, and then you have to labor and to be troubled greatly. If you wish to flee from tribulations and temptations do not go away from the desert, for in the desert no man will make you a bishop."

When I had departed from him I came to the desert, that is, to my place in which I dwelt, and having related these things to the blessed fathers, who after two months went and held intercourse with him, I forgot his words. Three years afterwards I fell sick with a sore sickness which was caused by my kidneys and stomach, and I was sent to Alexandria by the brethren who believed that I was collecting water (i.e. becoming dropsical), and the physicians counseled me to leave Alexandria, and for the sake of the climate to go to Palestine, where the climate was temperate and light and would be beneficial to my body. From Palestine I went to Bithynia, where, for what reason I do not know, whether

by the care and solicitude of men, or whether by the Will of God, Who is exalted above all things, I was held to be worthy of the laying on of hands for the episcopacy, which was far above my deserts, and I became an associate in the temptation which rose up against the blessed John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. Having been secluded for a period of about eleven months in a dark cell I remembered that blessed man who had told me of the things which had happened to me before they came to pass. Now the blessed man John related the things to me, according to my opinion, that by means of the narrative he might incite my mind and bring me to continue to dwell in the desert; and he said to me, "Behold, I have passed forty eight years in this cell, and I have never seen the face of a woman during the whole time, and no man has either seen me eat or drink."

The handmaiden of Christ Poemenia came to the blessed man and begged that she might see him, but the blessed man would not allow her to do so. He sent to her more spiritual words to give her consolation. He commanded her that when she was going down from the Thebaid she should not turn aside to Alexandria, saying that if she did so, she would certainly fall into temptations. But Poemenia, forgetting this advice and never letting it enter her mind again, turned aside to Alexandria that she might see the city. On the way, by the side of the city Nicius, she stopped her ship that she might rest herself. When her servants had disembarked, through some untoward circumstance strife broke out between them and the people of the country were hostile men. They cut off a finger of one believing man, and killed another. Without knowing it, they drowned the holy Bishop Dionysius in the river. They made the venerable woman endure many reviling and threatened to do much violence to her. They beat all her servants with many severe stripes, and they would hardly allow them to proceed on their way.

51. Of the Blessed Man Possidonius

THE THINGS WHICH ARE NARRATED concerning the holy man Possidonius the Theban are so many that it is impossible to describe them all. He was so gentle, gracious, patient, enduring, and his soul had so much goodness in it that I do not know that I ever met another man who was like to him. For, I lived with him in Bethlehem for a year. At the time he was living beyond the Monastery of the Shepherds, which was close to the town. I observed in him many qualities of excellence, of which I will relate an example of one or two. He told me one day when I was living by the side of Porphyrites, "I have not

spoken to a man for a whole year, and I have not heard the speech of one. I have not eaten bread, but the insides of palm leaves soaked in water and, whenever I could find it, wild honey. Once, however, the time came when these things failed me, and I was in sore tribulation because of it. I went forth from the cave that I might go to the habitations of men, and having journeyed on the whole day I was scarcely two miles distant from the cave. I turned and looked behind me, and I saw, as it were, a horseman whose appearance resembled that of a knight, and he had upon his head the similitude of a helmet, and thinking that he was a Roman I turned back to the cave, and I found outside it a basket of grapes and new, ripe figs, and I took them and went with them into the cave rejoicing; and that food sufficed to be a consolation to me for a period of two months."

The blessed man wrought in Bethlehem the following miracle. A certain woman had conceived, and was possessed of an unclean spirit. Being near to the bringing forth of her child she was greatly afflicted by birth pangs and was violently tortured by that spirit. As she was writhing by reason of the workings of that devil, her husband came and entreated the holy man to go and pray over her. We went into her house therefore that we might pray together. Having stood up and prayed, after he had knelt down twice he cast out that unclean spirit; when he stood up he said to us, "Pray, for immediately the devil shall go away." But there was a certain sign, the fulfillment of which he wished to show us, and therefore when that happened, the devil had gone forth. He overturned the whole of the courtyard wall to its very foundations. That woman had not spoken a word for a period of about six years. After that devil had gone forth she brought forth her child and spoke.

Moreover, I also saw an example of the prophecy of this blessed man. There was a certain elder, whose name was Hieronymus, who dwelt in these parts. He was exceedingly well versed in the art and practice of grammar and of eloquence. He was greatly skilled in the Latin language. But he possessed the vices of envy and evil-eyedness to such a degree that the excellence of his very great skill and ability was entirely hidden. The blessed man Possidonius had dwelt with him for many days, and he told me that the free woman Paula, who had taken care of him, departed from this world before her time in order that she might escape from his envy. According to my opinion, it was on account of this man that none of the holy men would live in these districts. The envy of this man continued to such a degree that it overtook his own brother, which thing took place even as he had foretold. He also persecuted the blessed man Oxyperentius, who came from Italy, the wonderful men, Peter the Egyptian and Simeon, who were seen by me. Possidonius the Great himself told me that

for the whole period of forty years he had not tasted food made of bread, and that wrath against any man did not abide with him as long as the half of the day.

52. Of Chronius of the Village of Phoenix

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN WHOSE NAME WAS CHRONIUS, who came from the village which was called Tomarta (i.e. Phoenix) which was near to the desert; and when he had gone away a little distance from human habitations, and had departed from his village, having measured out along the road with his right foot about fifteen thousand paces, he prayed and dug in that spot a pit, and he found there good and sweet water. The well was about seven fathoms in depth; and he built there a little habitation in which to dwell, and from the day in which he shut himself up in that place, he prayed to God that he might never return to a region inhabited by men. When he had dwelt there some few years, he was esteemed worthy to become a priest to the brotherhood, for there were gathered together to him about two hundred brethren. These excellent things are said concerning him: that during the whole of the period of sixty years, in which he was performing the ministrations of the altar, he never once went out of the desert, and that he never ate bread which he had not earned by the labor of his hands.

53. Of James the lame (and of Paphnutius Cephalas)

BY THE SIDE OF THIS CHRONIUS, who is mentioned above, there used to dwell a certain man who was called James the lame, and he was an exceedingly learned man; now both of these men knew the blessed Anthony. It came to pass one day that there happened to be there also Paphnutius, who is described as a man who watered gardens by machines, and who possessed the gift of knowledge to such a degree that he knew how to expound the Books of the Old and New Testaments without reading from them. He was such a gentle man that his meekness overcame the gift of prophecy which was found with him. The former was voluntary, and the latter was an act of Divine grace. Of this man it was said that he possessed spiritual excellence to such a degree that for a period of eighty years he did not own two tunics. When I and the blessed man Evagrius came to these men we desired to learn the reasons for the stumbling of the brethren and for their transgressions against the strict

rules of the ascetic life. It came to pass in those same days that Chaeremon the anchorite departed from the world whilst he was sitting on his seat, holding his work in his hand.

It came to pass that another brother was buried by a fall of earth when he was digging a well. Another died of thirst and need of water as he was coming from Scete. In addition to these we wished to learn concerning the matter of Stephen, which ought not to be spoken about, for he fell into foul lasciviousness. We asked concerning Eucarpus, and those which concerned Hero the Alexandrian, the Palestinian, Ptolemy the Egyptian, who were in Scete. We were asking among ourselves the question, "What is the reason why men live lives of this kind in the desert, whereby some receive injury mentally, and some are ensnared by lasciviousness?" Paphnutius, the man of great learning, made answer to us in the following words, saying, "All the various things which take place in the world must be divided into two categories, for some happen through the direct Will of God, and the others by His permission only; the things which are wrought to the praise of God, especially happen by the direct desire of God, but all those which appertain to loss, and danger, and to matters which produce tribulation take place by the permission of God. Permission arises from a fault on the part of the mind.

For it is impossible for the man who thinks rightly to fall into foul sins, or into the error which arises from the devils, for all of these take place through a corrupt intent, or disposition, and through the love of the approval of the children of men, and by the daring of the thoughts, which hope to make perfect spiritual excellence. Such men fall into reprehensible wickedness, and God permits them so to do, that they may be a help to others, that when they feel the difference which has come upon them through this permission, they may remember themselves and may turn again to spiritual excellence, either that which exists in the mind, or that which exists in deeds. Sometimes it is the mind which sins, that is to say, when that sin which takes place is committed with evil intent; and sometimes it is the deeds themselves which must be rejected, as, for example, when they are performed in a manner which is quite beyond everything which is right and seemly, and this latter case happens frequently. Thus a man of lust will, with corrupt design, give alms to young women in order that he may fulfill his foul desire, even though at the beginning he may say, 'It is a beautiful act for us to offer help to the maiden who is an orphan, and alone in the world and in misery.' Again it may happen that a man may begin to do alms with a good and acceptable intent to those who are sick, or to those who have lost their riches and become poor, and that though he gives his gift in a niggardly manner, and may murmur at the

expense and become angry, his motive in giving will be found to be a right one. The deed is not to be thought equal to the motive. For, it is right for the man who would show mercy to make his gift 'gladly and with a good eye.'"

They also spoke the following story: "There is a difference between the gifts, which exist in various souls. Some of them possess keenness of mind, and some of them find it exceedingly easy and simple to acquire the habits of ascetic self-denial, or to do that which is difficult for other souls to do; but when a man makes use of his gift of keenness of mind without a good object for so doing, or when he exerts his faculty of performing things because it is easy for him to do so, or when men exercise the gifts which they have received, they do not ascribe, as would be right, the correctness of their spiritual excellences to God, but to their own desire, and to their own keenness of mind. Those to whom it is sufficient to perform fair works are permitted by the Divine Providence to be caught in a snare, either by filthy deeds or filthy passions, or by the contempt or by the disgrace which comes to them from the children of men, so that through the shame and the contempt which they receive from the multitude they may little by little and by degrees cast away from them their boasting about the spiritual excellence which they imagine they possess.

For he who is inflated and unduly exalted at the keenness of speech which he possesses does not ascribe to God, as is right, such keenness, or the discovery of the knowledge which is from Him, but to his own training, amusingly, or to his own naturally keen disposition; therefore does God remove from him the Angel of His Divine Providence, and the Angel being separated from him, this man is immediately vanquished by his Adversary, and he who was unduly lifted up in his keenness of mind and speech falls into lasciviousness, or into some kind of filthy passion, because he was unduly exalted. Because he was lifted up, and because the witness of chastity has separated himself from him, the things which are said by him become unworthy of credence, and those who fear God flee from the teaching of the mouth of the man who is in this condition, even as they would flee from a fountain which is full of leeches, so that there may be fulfilled that which is written, 'To the sinner God says, "What have you to do with the Books of My Commandments? For, you have taken My Covenant your mouth."'"

For in very truth the souls of those who are moved by passions are like to fountains of diverse kinds; the souls of gluttons and of those who live in impurity and drunkenness are like to muddy springs; and the souls of those who love money and are greedy are like to wells which are full of frogs; and the souls of those who live in envy and pride, even though there be found in their nature a facility for receiving doctrine, are like to wells which breed

snakes, and which, even though their flow be continual, no man is able to drink from because of the bitterness of their manners and habits. Because of this the blessed man David asked and entreated God to give him three things: graciousness, knowledge, and instruction. For without graciousness knowledge has no use, and if a man whose manner of life is thus correct shall himself lift from off himself the cause of the permission from God, which is boasting, and shall take upon himself humility, and shall recognize his true capacity, and shall not, at the same time, exalt himself over any man, and shall confess and give thanks to God, the witness of knowledge will return to him again.

This is the behavior of spiritual excellence. For the spiritual words of a chaste mode of life do not permit to grow up together with them the parched spear grasses, and ears of corn which have been smitten by the drought, and which by reason of their appearance make men think they are full, whilst there is no flour of bread in them. Every lapse which takes place, either through the tongue, or through some feeling, or through some action, or through the whole body, takes place in proportion to the measure of a mans pride, and by the permission of God, Who shows compassion upon those who commit themselves to His Divine Providence. For if, in addition to their skill in ordering their speech and their keenness of nature, the Lord was also to testify to the beauty of their words by never permitting them to fall, the arrogance with which they would exalt themselves in impurity would probably surpass that of the devils."

The following also did these men of the house of Abba Paphnutius say to us: "When you see evil deeds and acts, that is to say, the conversation of him who leads an evil life and know that they are fair and exceedingly plausible, remember the Devil who, as we learn from the Holy Scriptures, spoke with Christ. Also the testimony which says, 'Now the serpent was the most subtle of all the serpents which were on the earth.' That it was by reason of his subtlety that destruction came upon him, because he possessed no other quality of excellence, which attached itself closely to his cunning. For it is necessary that the believing man who fears God should ponder upon that which God gives to him. Let him speak that which he meditates, and let him do that which he speaks. For if to the asseveration of words there be not attached a brotherhood in acts and deeds, it is bread without salt, which cannot be eaten, lest digestion be disturbed, even as the blessed man Job said, 'Can the thing which is insipid be eaten without salt? Or, is there any taste in the juice of the ox tongue plant?' Even thus polished words possess no savor at all unless they are made complete by works. Therefore there is one kind of permission which hideth spiritual excellence in order that it may be revealed, as, for example, that of Job

concerning which God made known when He said to him, 'Do not blame My judgment, and do not think that I have done these things to you for any other reason than that it might be known that you are righteous. You were known to Me because I see secret things, but you were not revealed to the children of men, because they thought that you did care exceedingly for riches that you might make perfect My pleasure; it was for this reason that I brought upon you the trial of stripping you of your riches so that I might show them your gratitude towards Me, and your patient endurance.'

There is another kind of permission which God gives in order to drive out pride, as in the case of Paul, for the blessed Paul was permitted by means of distractions and a goad. He fell into diverse tribulations, and said, 'There has been given to me a goad in my flesh, a messenger of Satan,' to buffet me so that I may not be unduly exalted, lest through the superfluity of the revelations, and signs, and gratifications of the spirit, and prosperity and honors which were found with him, he might become lax and fall into arrogance. The paralytic was permitted because of sin, even according to what our Redeemer said to him, 'Behold, you are whole; sin no more.' Judas was permitted because he held money in greater esteem than life. Because of this he hanged himself. Esau was permitted, and he fell into filthy desire because he honored the dung of the bowels more than the divine birth right. Therefore, because the blessed Paul understood all these things, he did say concerning men, 'Because they have not decided within themselves that they will know God, He has delivered them over to an empty understanding so that they may work that which is unseemly.' Concerning other men who think that the knowledge of God is in them, together with the corrupt mind which they possess, he said, 'Because they have known God, and have not praised Him as God, and given thanks to Him, He has delivered them over to the passions of disgrace.' Here from these things it is necessary that we should know that it is impossible for a man to stumble and fall into filthy desire without the permission of the Providence of God."

54. Of the Blessed Man Solomon

I WENT ABOUT IN ARITINOE OF THE THEBAID for a period of four years, and I learned concerning the whole of the system of the religious houses which were there; for about twelve hundred men dwelt by the side of the city, worked with their hands, and lived the life of spiritual excellence. Among these there was a number of solitary monks who shut themselves up in caves, and among

them was one who was called Solomon; a chaste and humble man, and to him was given the gift of patient endurance. He used to say that he had passed fifty years in the cave, during which time he had fed himself by means of his labor, and he could repeat the Scriptures by heart.

55. Of Dorotheos the Priest

THERE WAS DOROTHEOS, A PRIEST, who used to live in a cave, and he possessed more goodness than many men, and led a spiritual life of high excellence. He had been held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood. He performed the offices of it for the brethren who dwelt in the caves. To this blessed man Melania the Less, the kinswoman of Melania the Great, concerning whom we are about to speak later, sent five hundred darics and begged him to spend them on behalf of the brethren who were there. He only took three of them, and sent the remainder to the wandering monk Diocles, a man of knowledge and understanding, saying, "O' our brother Diocles, you are wiser than I am; I am not equal to spending these." Having taken them Diocles was able to spend them wisely on those whom he knew of a certainty to be in want.

56. Of Diocles

THIS MAN DIOCLES WAS ORIGINALLY ONE OF THOSE who were greatly skilled in grammar, but afterwards he became learned in philosophy. Having arrived at the period of the twenty eighth year of his life, he was called by the Grace of God, and he departed and removed himself from the house of instruction, and delivered himself over to the promise of Christ; and having dwelt in caves for the space of thirty five years, he said to us, "The mind which removes itself from the meditation of God falls into lust." He used to say that lust was that of a savage, animal, and bestial character, for he said to us, "The mind which falls away from the meditation of God becomes either a devil or a beast." We asked him to explain this saying to us, and he said, "The mind which makes itself to be remote from the contemplation of God must be delivered over either to the devil of lust, who leads it into lasciviousness, or to the evil devil of wrath, where from are produced the animal passions." He said, "The feeling of lasciviousness is a bestial thing, but the feeling of wrath appertains to the devil." Making answer, we said to him, "How is it possible for

the human mind to be with God continually and uninterruptedly?" He said, "The mind of that soul which lives in the thought or deed of the fear of God, no matter what it may be, is with God."

57. Of the Blessed Man Kapiton

BY THE SIDE OF THIS MAN THERE USED TO DWELL KAPITON, a man who had been formerly a thief, and he had lived in holes in the rocks for fifty years, at a place which was about four miles from Antinoe; he never went down from his cave, not even to the river Nile, for he used to say that he was unable to meet in the congregation of the children of men him that still fought with him, namely, his Adversary.

58. Of the Monk who Fell

BY THE SIDE OF THESE BLESSED MEN I SAW A MAN who also had made himself remote from the world, and he dwelt in holes in the rocks even as did they. This man was mocked at by the devil of vainglory, and by the visions which he saw, and was deluded by things which appeared to approach him and then wandered away. He was lacking in mind, even as it is written, "Being exalted in his dreams he pastures spirits and pursues after a shadow." He was chaste in his body, perhaps owing to the length of his years, or through vainglory, yet through the matters of spiritual excellence he destroyed his understanding, and he was corrupted by empty and polluted glory, and because of this he departed from the straight road of the ascetic life.

59. Of the Blessed Man Ephraim

A CERTAIN MAN AMONG THE HOLY FATHERS saw in a dream the company of the holy angels who came down from heaven by the commandment of God, and one of them held in his hand a roll which was written on the inside and oil the outside; and the angels said to each other, "Who is fit to be entrusted with this thing?" Then some of them mentioned one man and others another, and others answered and said, "Assuredly these whom you mention are holy, and righteous, but they are not sufficiently so to be entrusted with this thing." Having reckoned up many names of Saints, they finally said, "No

man is fit to be entrusted with this thing; except Ephraim." Then they gave the roll to him. When he had stood up in the morning, he heard that they were saying; "Behold, Ephraim teaches, and his words flow from his mouth like water from a fountain." Then the old man who had seen the vision knew within himself that the things which were proceeding from his lips were of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore this Ephraim, who was one of those who had been held to be worthy of mention by the saints, travelled along the spiritual road nobly and straightly, turning neither to one side nor the other of the straight path; and he was held to be worthy of the gift of the knowledge which he possessed naturally, and subsequently he received the knowledge which enabled him to utter divine things, and perfect blessedness. Thus he lived throughout the period of a certain number of years a life of chastity, and stern asceticism, and contemplation, and edified all those who thronged to visit him, each according to his peculiar needs; and finally he compelled himself to go forth from his cell for the following reason, namely, a mighty famine lay over the city of Edessa. For having compassion on the creatures of the human race which was perishing and being destroyed, he spoke to those who were heaping up grain in the store houses, for he saw that they were wholly without compassion, saying, "How long will you refuse to bring into your memories the loving kindness of God? How long will you allow your corruptible wealth, to be the means of the accusation and condemnation of your souls?" Then they took counsel, and said to him, "There is no man whatever whom we can trust to relieve the wants of those who are dying of hunger; for all the people are crafty and they act in a lying fashion concerning affairs of this kind." Then Ephraim said to them, "What manner of man do you imagine I am?" His character was held in the highest esteem by every man in the city, and every man knew that he acted according to the truth and not falsehood. The people said to him, "O man, we know that you are God." He said to them, "Put your trust in me, then, and give me the means of relieving this distress, for behold, for your sakes, I will set myself apart to become the keeper of a house for receiving strangers."

He took money, and he began to fence off in the streets places which were suitable for his purpose, and he provided with great care three hundred beds, some of which were intended for use in the burial of those who were dying, and others were intended for those who, it was thought, would live; and, in short, he brought in from the villages which were outside the city all those whom famine had stricken, and put them to bed, and every day he performed for them with the greatest possible solicitude the constant service of which they were in need, paying for the same with the money which came to him,

and he rejoiced by means of those who supported him in the matter.

It came to pass that, when that year of famine had been fulfilled, and there arrived after it a year of abundance, and every man departed to his house, inasmuch as he had nothing else to do he went into his cell; and after a period of one month he brought his life to a close, God having given him the opportunity whereby he might be crowned at the end of his life. He left behind him many books, and writings of various kinds, which were worthy of being preserved with the greatest care. It is said concerning him that when he was a youth he saw a dream, that is to say a vision, in which a vine grew up out of his tongue, and it increased in size, and filled the whole of the space which was beneath the heavens, and was laden with grape clusters in rich abundance; and all the feathered fowl of the heavens came and ate of the food of it, and all the time they were eating the grape clusters were increasing both in numbers and in size.

60. *Of Innocent the Priest*

CONCERNING THE MATTERS OF THE BLESSED PRIEST INNOCENT, who lived in the Mount of Olives, I think that you must have heard from many people, but you may also learn from us not a few things, for we lived with him for a period of three years. Now therefore this man was exceedingly simple, and he was one of the nobles of the palace in the kingdom of the Emperor Constantine. He withdrew himself from the partnership of marriage, but he had a son whose name was Paule, who served in the household of the Emperor. This son was caught in a transgression with the daughter of a certain priest, and Innocent was exceedingly angry with him. Then Innocent made entreaty to God, saying, "O' our Lord, give you to him such a spirit that he will not be able to find time to sin in the lust of the body," for he thought that it would be better and more excellent in every way for his son to be delivered over to a devil rather than to fornication. This actually came to pass to the youth, and he lives to this day in the Mount of Olives loaded with irons, and admonished by a devil. This man Innocent, the father of Paule, because he was of a most merciful disposition though if I were to tell the whole truth I should say that he appeared to me to be lacking in sense; on very many occasions he stole things and hid them from the brethren, and gave them to those who were in want; but he was a simple man and had no wickedness in him; and he was held to be worthy of the gift of the possession of power over devils.

For a certain maiden, in whom was a devil, came to him, and whilst we

were looking at her the devil struck her, and threw her down upon the ground and made her body to writhe and twist about; and when I saw this I wished to dismiss that maiden in order that she might go to her mother, because, on account of the cruelty of that devil, I thought that she could never be healed. Whilst I was pondering those things the old man Innocent came, and he saw her mother standing, and weeping, and tearing her face with her nails, and plucking out her hair, because of the great madness, and the gnashing of the teeth, and the contortions of her daughter. When, therefore, that blessed old man saw her, his mercy revealed itself because he was grieved on account of her tribulation, and he took the maiden, and went into his martyrion, which he himself had built, and in which was preserved a blessed relic of Saint John the Baptist, and having prayed there and made supplication to God from the third to the ninth hour, he gave the maiden back to her mother, and she was healed on that day, and he drove away from her the devil and his struggles with her. The struggling and contortions of the maiden were such that when she spat, she spat upon her side instead of away from her; to this extent was her body twisted.

A certain old woman lost a sheep, and came to him weeping about it. He took her and said, "Show me the place where you lost it." They came, therefore, to a place, which was near the grave of Lazarus, where he stood up and prayed. Certain boys had stolen the sheep and had already killed it. Innocent, having prayed, and the boys being unwilling to confess that the flesh of the sheep was buried in a vineyard, a raven suddenly appeared, though no man knew where from, which had taken a piece of flesh from the carcass, and stood over the place where it was. When the old man saw this he perceived that the sheep was buried there. Then those boys fell down and did homage to him. They confessed that they had taken the sheep, and paid the price of it to its mistress.

61. Of the Blessed Elpidius

IN THOSE CAVES WHICH, IN ANCIENT TIMES, certain men had hewn out of the rock in the valley of the river near Jericho, in which those who had fled from before Joshua, the son of Nun, had gone up and hidden themselves, there dwelt Elpidius. He was a Cappadocian, who had been converted in the monastery of Timothy the Chorepiskopos. He was a wonderful man and was also held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood. He came and dwelt in one of these caves, and he showed such patient persistence in his self-

abnegation, that he surpassed and eclipsed many thereby; for he followed for twenty five years his rule of life, and during that time he only ate food on the Sabbath day, and on the First Day of the week, and he dwelt like the chief and the king of the bees among the cells of the whole brotherhood. He used to rise up continually during the night and pray; and I myself also dwelt with him. He made that mountain to be so peaceful and to contain so many inhabitants that it resembled a city, and during the night season a man might see the various works, and the labors of all kinds which appertain to the ascetic life, being performed there.

One night, when this man Elpidius was reciting the service, now we were with him, a scorpion stung him, and he crushed the insect, without either leaving the place where he was or being in any way moved as a man usually is when he is suffering from the sting of a scorpion. One day as he was holding in his hand a vine branch, a certain brother took it away from him; and as he was sitting by the side of the mountain, he dug a hole and pushed the vine branch into it, like a man who is planting vines; and although it was not the time for planting, the vine branch sprouted, and grew very large, and spread its branches abroad until it covered the whole church. The name of that brother was Enesius, a wonderful man.

62. Of the Blessed Man Eustathius

EUSTATHIUS WAS A BROTHER OF ELPIDIUS whom we have mentioned above, and this man followed so strenuously after the acquisition of impassability, and made his body so dry (i.e. emaciated) by the labors of vigilant prayer, that the light of the sun could be seen between his ribs. Of him the following story is told by the brethren who were continually with him, that is to say by his disciples: "He never turned himself towards the west, because close by the side of the door of his cave was a mountain which, because of its mighty bulk, was very hard to ascend; and he never looked at the sun after the sixth hour of the day, because the door of his cell was hidden by the shadow of the mountain so long as the sun was declining towards its place of setting. Moreover he could never see those stars which appear in the western part of the sky, and for twenty five years from the time when he entered the cave in which he dwelt he never went down from the mountain."

63. *Of the Blessed Man Sisinnius*

THIS HOLY MAN ELPIDIUS HAD A CERTAIN DISCIPLE whose name was Sisinnius, who was a slave by birth, though a free man in the faith; by race he was a Cappadocian, and it is necessary that we should make known the fact that he was so, for the sake of the glorifying of Christ Who has made us worthy to be accounted His kinsmen, and to be exalted to that true family, which is full of happiness, of the kingdom of heaven. When this man Sisinnius had passed some time with Elpidius, and had struggled to lead the ascetic life strenuously for a period of seven years, he at length, shut himself in a grave for three years. He endured such privations therein that neither by day nor by night did he sit or lie down, and he never went out here from. This man was held to be worthy of possessing the gift of authority over devils, and now that he has come into his own country he has been held to be worthy of the gift of the priesthood. He has made congregations of men and of women, which, according to a sure testimony, lead lives of purity and chastity. He has trampled upon the lust, which is in men, and he has bridled the voluptuousness of the women, so that there has been fulfilled that which is written, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." He was also a great lover of strangers and of voluntary poverty, which was a reproach to those who were rich and miserly.

64. *Of the Blessed Man Gaddai*

ISAW A CERTAIN OLD MAN WHOSE NAME WAS GADDAI, who lived without a shelter all his days in the places, which were by the side of the Jordan. On one occasion the Jews rose up against him in fierce hatred by the side of the Dead Sea, and they drew the sword against him, and one of them took up a weapon to smite him, when the following great and wonderful thing was wrought upon the man who dared to lift up a sword against the blessed man: the hand of the man who had drawn the sword withered immediately, and the sword itself fell upon the ground.

65. *Of the Blessed Man Elijah*

THERE WAS IN THIS PLACE A SOLITARY MONK CALLED ELIJAH who used to dwell in a cave, and he passed his life in performing the works of spiritual excellence, and was worthy of praise. One day, a great many of the brethren

thronged to him; now his dwelling place was a cave. He lacked bread, and he made apologies to us because he was troubled on account of the insufficiency of the bread. Therefore, when the brethren went into his cell they found three loaves of bread, and when twenty men had eaten and were satisfied, there still remained one loaf which, one said, satisfied him for twenty five days.

66. Of Sabas, the Layman of Jericho

THERE WAS A CERTAIN LAYMAN FROM JERICHO whose name was Sabas, and he had a wife. This man loved the monks so much that during the night season he used to go round about in the desert, and pass by the cells of the solitary monks there, and outside the cell and habitation of each one of them he would set down a bushel of dates and vegetables, which would be sufficient for his wants, for the monks who lived by the side of the Jordan did not eat bread, and thus this man Sabas supplied the wants of the monks. One day as he was carrying along a load of food for the usual needs of the monks, through the operation of the evil, who is the adversary of the monks, a lion met him, which terrified him, and wished to make him to cease from his ministrations to those holy men, and schemed to prevent him from performing his benevolent intent for their comfort. And the lion having overtaken him about a mile from the place where the monks were, and having seized him by his hand in order to turn him aside from his business, He Who by the hand of Daniel shut the mouths of the lions, shut the mouth of this lion also. The beast did not harm this lover of alms. Although the lion was exceedingly hungry he only took a very little of the things which Sabas was carrying for the old men, and then departed. It is manifest that He Who gave this man his life also satisfied the hunger of the lion.

67. Of the Blessed Man Serapion of the Girdle

AGAIN THERE WAS A CERTAIN BLESSED MAN whose name was Serapion, who was called "Serapion of the girdle," because during his whole life he neither put on nor was clothed with anything except the girdle with which he was girt about; and he led a life of the strictest self-denial and poverty. Though he was a wholly unlearned man he could repeat all the Scriptures by heart. And by reason of the greatness of his self-denial and the repetition of the Scriptures he was unable to live in a cell, because he could not make use of anything which

belonged to this world. But he went round about at all seasons and taught the multitudes, and he sold himself voluntarily, and he preached, and taught, and turned many people to God. And this form of self-denial was of his own choosing, and it was by such means as this that he made his preparation for heaven. There are very many ways of leading a stern life of self-denial. Many of the venerable fathers relate concerning him that on one occasion he took a fellow monk, who sold him to some comic actors for twenty dinars in a city of the heathen, and having received these dinars he tied them up in a bag and sealed them, and kept them carefully; and then he became subject to and ministered in all humility to those actors who had bought him until he had taught them and made them Christians, and had freed them from following the business of the theatre. And he never ate anything except dry bread and water, and his mouth never once ceased from uttering the words of the Scriptures.

The man who was the master of the actors was the first to become converted and enlightened by the word of God, and the next was his wife, and finally their whole house was converted. During the first years after the actors had bought him, and when they did not know who he was, he used to wash their feet with his hands, and having taught them and baptized them he made them remote from their occupation in the theatre, and they led a God fearing life in all righteousness. They held him in reverence, honoured him, and marveled at his radiant life. Finally they said to him, "Come, O our brother, we will set you free from this servitude, even as you have set us free from the slavery of heathenism." Then he answered and said to them, "Since God has helped me, and your souls have been set free and they have life, I will tell you my story and my contending. I undertook this kind of work in order that your souls might have life. By race I am an Egyptian, and a free man but I am a monk vowed to self-denial and poverty, and for the sake of our Lord I sold myself to you in order that your souls might be set free from the impurity of this world; since now our Lord has worked through my meekness, and your souls live, take your gold, and I will go to another place, so that I may be able to benefit others also." They begged and entreated him, saying, "Remain with us, you shall be to us a father, a master, and a director." But he would not hearken to their entreaty. Again they answered him saying, "Give the gold to the poor, and let it be a pledge of life for us; and we entreat you to see us if it be only once a year."

This man having gone round about came to Hellas, and stayed in Athens three days, and no man gave him a morsel of bread; now he carried nothing with him, neither purse, nor wallet, nor head-cloak, nor anything whatsoever.

When the fourth day had come, he became exceedingly hungry. He went and stood up upon a certain high place where all the free men of the city were gathered together, and he began to clap his hands, and to cry out with a loud voice, saying, "O men of Athens, send help." At the sound of his voice they all marveled, and the free men and the soldiers ran to him, saying to him, "What ails you? Where did you come? What has happened to these?" Then he said to them, "By race I am an Egyptian, and being a long way from my true country I have fallen into the hands of three creditors; now two of these have departed from me, having taken that which was theirs, and now they have no debt against me about which to chide me, but the third will not leave me."

The philosophers made enquiries of him who these creditors were, and they said to him, "Show us who your creditors are, who is afflicting you, and we will entreat them to desist; show us who they are, so that we may help you." He answered and said to them, "From my youth up the love of money, and fornication, and the appetite of the belly have oppressed me; from the first two of these, that is, the love of money and fornication, I have been freed, and they no longer oppress me, but I am wholly unable to set myself free from the appetite of the belly. Behold, it is now the fourth day since I have eaten anything and the belly constrains me, for it demands that which is its usual debt, and unless this debt be paid I shall not be able to live." Then certain of the philosophers thought that he had schemed this crafty device in order that he might gain some benefit, and one of them took a dinars and gave it to him, and having taken it he spent part of it in buying bread in their presence; and he took one loaf of bread, and straightaway departed from the city, and did not come back to it again. Thus the philosophers knew that he was indeed a wonderful man, and they paid the price of the loaf of bread which he had taken, and received back the dinars.

Having departed to another city he heard there concerning a certain other man, who was the chief of the whole city, and who was a Manichæan, with all his house, and who had several associates in the city. Then the monk, according to his former plan, sold himself to this Manichæan, and in two years he was able to turn this man and his wife from their error, and to bring them into the Catholic Church. After they had learned what he did, they never again regarded him as a slave, but they honoured him as a father, and as a master, and they ascribed praise to God.

Once he determined to go to Rome. He embarked in a ship which was going there that he might go with them (i.e. with the sailors). When the sailors of the ship saw that he boldly embarked in the ship carrying nothing with him, neither bread, nor anything else, nor provisions for the journey, they thought

that one of their number must have taken his baggage and placed it in the ship. Because of this thought they received him unquestioningly. Having embarked, when the sailors had sailed from Alexandria a distance of about five hundred stadia, each one of those who were sitting in the ship began at the time of sunset to eat, and the sailors also ate in their presence. They observed that the monk did not eat on the first day, and thought that he did not do so because of sea-sickness, and thus also was it on the second day, on the third day, and on the fourth day. On the fifth day, whilst all those who were on the ship were eating their meal he sat in his place and was silent. They were looking at him and said, "Why do you not eat?" He replied, "I have nothing to eat." They began to make enquiries and to cry out among themselves, "Who among you has taken his things, or his provisions for the way?" When they saw that no man had taken anything from him they began to dispute with him, and said to him, "O man, how is it that you have embarked on the ship without provisions and money? Where will you obtain the money to give us for your passage?" He said to them, "I have not thought about it altogether, for an Egyptian has no anxious care about anything. Carry me back where you took me and cast me out if you wish."

Even if he had given them one hundred dinars they would not have been able to take him back to Alexandria. He therefore remained in the ship. They fed him until he arrived in Rome. Having come to Rome he made enquiries and learned what monk or nun was there, and he found Rumnin (or Domnin), the disciple of Evagrius, whose bed, after his death, cured every kind of sickness. Having seen him, and spoken with him he was greatly edified by him, for he was a man who was greatly skilled in the labors of the ascetic life, and in speech, and in knowledge, and he learned from him what monk and nuns were in Rome, in order that he might see them.

The venerable fathers relate concerning him that he once heard that there was in the city of Rome a certain nun who led a life of the strictest seclusion. She had never seen a man, and used to think concerning herself that she was perfect. This blessed man threw himself into a ship and came to Rome. Having learned where she lived he went and spoke with the old woman who ministered to her, and said to her, "Get in and say to the virgin, I desire to see you most eagerly, because God has sent me to you." And he waited two days and then saw her. When he saw her he said, "Sit down." She said to him, "I will not sit down, but will depart." He said to her, "Where are you going?" She said to him, "To God." He said to her, "Are you living or dead?" She said to him, "I believe, by God, that I am dead, for whoever lives in the body is not able to depart from it." He said to her, "If you are dead, as you say, do you that which

I do." She said to him, "Tell me what can happen, and I will do it." Again he said to her, "To one who is dead to the world it is easy to do everything except commit sin." He further said to her, "Come down, and get out of your house." She said to him, "I have not gone out of it for twenty five years, why should I go out of it now?" He said to her, "If you are indeed dead to the world, and the world is dead to you, it is the same thing to you whether you go forth or do not go away; come, get out." She went out.

After she had gone out, she followed him to a certain church, and he said to her in the church, "If you wish me to believe that you are dead to the world and are not alive, in order that you may be pleasing to the children of men, do what I do, and then I will believe you, and I shall know that you are a dead woman, even as you say." She said to him, "Tell me what it is necessary for me to do, and I will do it." Then he said to her, "Cast off your garments and put them on your head, and walk through the midst of the city, and I will do likewise, and will go in front of you in this guise." The nun said to him, "I should offend many folks by such a remarkable act as this, and then they would say, 'This woman has gone mad, and has a devil.'" He said to her, "What need you have to consider their words even if they should say, 'She has gone mad, and has a devil?' For, according to what you yourself say, you are a dead woman to them."

The nun said to him, "If there be anything else except this, tell me, for I cannot come to such a measure of disgrace as this." Then he said to her, "Do not imagine in your mind that you are more perfect than anyone else, or that you are dead to the world; for I am far more dead to the world than you are, and I can show you that I am indeed so, and that I can boldly do this thing without feeling shame or disgrace." Having broken her spirit and humbled her pride, he departed from her. There were many things of the same kind, which this same Serapion did in the world, for he despised both worldly shame and the glory, which passes away. He died at the age of sixty years, and was buried at a good old age, adorned with all virtues.

68. The Triumph of the Blessed Man Eulogius

THE FOLLOWING STORY WAS RELATED TO ME BY CHRONIUS, the priest of Nitria, who said, "When I was a young man I abhorred the monastery, and I fled from it, and from the head of the monastery who was my instructor, and having lost my way and gone round about, I came to the Monastery of Saint Anthony. He used to dwell between the mountains of Babylon and Herakleia,

in a parched desert which led to the Red Sea, about thirty miles from the river Nile. I was there in that monastery in which dwelt those disciples of his who buried him when he died, now their names were Macarius and Amatus, in a place which was called Espir.

I remained there for five days, so that I might be able to see the blessed Anthony, for they used to say that he was in the habit of coming to this monastery from the inner desert once every five, or ten, or twenty days, according as God directed and brought him, to give help to the souls who thronged into his monastery, and who awaited him there, in order that they might be relieved by him. The brethren also were assembled there and waited for him also, each one of them having his own individual matter to lay before him.

Among them was a certain man from Alexandria, whose name was Eulogius, and with him was another man, an Arian, whose body was destroyed (i.e. he was a leper), and they had come because of this matter. This man Eulogius was a scholar, and he was the most educated of all the learned men of this time, but the love of the living God had suddenly come into his mind. He made himself to be remote from the world, and distributed all the money which he had among the poor. He left himself only a small sum which was just sufficient for his bodily needs, for he was unable to work or to enter into a monastery with many monks in it, and besides this lassitude was contending with him, and he sought a little companionship.

He went forth seeking to buy something which he wanted in the city, and he found in the market a certain man who was an Arian, and whose whole body was destroyed; he had neither hands nor feet, but his tongue was sharp, and he employed it unsparingly upon every man whom he met. When Eulogius had seen him, and looked at him, he lifted up his eyes and his mind towards God, and he prayed and made this covenant between himself and God, saying, "O our Lord Jesus Christ, in Your Name, O my Lord, I will take this man, who is sick in his body, and I will relieve his wants all the days of my life, so that through him my soul may live before You. I beseech You to give me power to endure in my ministering to him." After he prayed, he drew near to the man, and said, "I beseech you, O man, to let me take you to my house and to relieve your wants." The sick man said to him, "Why not?" Then Eulogius said to him, "I will therefore bring an ass, and carry you off." He promised him saying, "I and he went and brought an ass and carried him to the place where he lived, and he took care of him with the greatest diligence." For a period of fifteen years Eulogius relieved his wants with the greatest and most careful attention, and even washed him with his own hands. He did everything he

could to alleviate the affliction of his sickness.

After fifteen years a devil began to stir in that Arian, and began to revile Eulogius, and to offer resistance to him. He cursed him and hurled after him insults and abuse, saying, "O you runaway slave, who has eaten your lord, you have stolen the riches of other folk and are spending them upon me, and you think to have life through me! Cast me out into the street, for I wish to eat flesh." Eulogius brought him flesh, and again he cried out, and said, "You will not persuade me to remain here by these means; I wish to go out into the street, and I desire to see the world. By Jupiter, carry me out and cast me where you did find me. If I only had hands I would strangle myself." He spoke thus through the madness of the devil, which was with him. Then Eulogius rose up and went to the neighbouring monks and said to them, "What shall I do? For this deformed man has brought me to despair. I would set him free, only I have given my right hand in covenant to God, and I am afraid to do so; but on the other hand, if I do not cast him out he will bring upon me bad nights and bitter days. What to do with him I know not." They said to him, "Anthony the Great is still alive, go to him; take the man with you in a ship, go up to him, carry the man to his monastery, and wait there until he comes from the desert. Then tell him your business. Whatever word he shall say to you, you shall perform, for God shall speak to you through him." Then Eulogius was persuaded by them, placed the man in a small boat, and carried him to the monastery in which were the disciples of Anthony.

It came to pass that on the very day after Eulogius had arrived there that great man came from the inner desert to his disciples in the late evening, and he was clothed in his skin cloak. Whenever he came to his monastery he was in the habit of calling out to his disciple Macarius, and saying to him, "O brother Macarius, have any brethren come this day from anywhere?" Macarius would say, "Yes." Then Anthony would say, "Are they Egyptians or Jerusalemites?" He had given Macarius this sign. When you see brethren who are simple and innocent say they are Egyptians; but when you see brethren who are venerable and are skilled in speaking, say they are Jerusalemites. Therefore according to his custom Anthony asked Macarius, "Are they Egyptian brethren or Jerusalemites?" Macarius said, "They are neither Egyptians nor Jerusalemites." When Macarius would answer, "They are Egyptians," Anthony would say to him, "Cook them a mess of lentils that they may eat, and then dismiss them, and let them go in peace." He would say a prayer on their behalf, and would straightaway send them away. When Macarius would answer, "They are Jerusalemites," Anthony would sit down the whole night, and would converse with them to the benefit of their lives.

On that night he sat down, and called to them all, and he discoursed without any man having told him the name of one of them, and it was dark and the night had come; and suddenly he cried out three times, thus, "Eulogius, Eulogius, Eulogius." And Eulogius the scholar did not answer a word, because he thought that Anthony was calling some other person. Again Anthony cried out to him, "To you I speak, O Eulogius, who has come from Alexandria." Then Eulogius said to him, "Master, what do you command me to do? Tell me, I beseech you." Anthony said to him, "Why have you come?"

Eulogius answered and said to him, "Let Him that has revealed to you my name declare to you for what purpose I have come." Then Anthony said to him, "I know why you have come, nevertheless declare it before the brethren in order that they may hear." Eulogius answered and said to him, "I found this Arian in the street, and I gave the right hand to God (i.e. made a covenant with God), that I would minister to him, that I might live because of him, and he because of me. Behold I have ministered to him for the last fifteen years, and now, after all these years he stirs himself up against me, and causes me tribulation, and I have had it in my mind to cast him out; therefore I have come to your holiness so that you may advise me what I should do, and that you may pray on my behalf, for I am greatly oppressed and am in sore straits." Anthony said to him angrily in a hard voice, "If you send him away, He who created him will not send him away; if you do cast him out, God, Who is better and more excellent than you, will gather him to himself." When Eulogius heard these words he set a bridle on his mouth and was silent.

Having left Eulogius, Anthony came to chastise the Arian with his tongue, cried out and said to him, "O you deformed Arian, you are worthy neither of heaven nor of earth. Will not you cease to contend against God? Do not you know that he who ministers to you is Christ? How can you dare to utter these words against our Lord? Was not it for Christ's sake that Eulogius gave himself to your service?" Then having made the man sorrowful, he ceased from Eulogius and the Arian, and spoke to all the brethren who were there, to every man according to his business. He called to Eulogius and the Arian and said to them, "Do not turn to any other place, but depart, do not separate yourselves from one another, and return to the cell in which you have lived so long a time, for behold God will send upon you your end. And behold, this trial has come upon you because the end of both of you is near, and because you are esteemed worthy of crowns. Therefore do not act in a contrary manner, and let not the angel come after you and not find you in your places, lest you be deprived of your crowns." So the two of them departed and came to their cell. In less than forty days Eulogius died, and in less than three days afterwards the

Arian died.

This Chronius, who related to us the narrative of this matter, tarried for a time in the monasteries which were in the Thebaid, and came down to the monasteries which were in Alexandria. It happened that the brethren were gathered together commemorating the death of Eulogius after forty days, and the death of the Arian after three days. When Chronius heard, he marveled, took down a Book of the Gospels, and set it down among the brotherhood. Then related what had happened; and he took an oath and said, "In all this affair I was the interpreter for Saint Anthony because he did not know Greek; but I know both languages, and I acted interpreter for both sides, turning Greek into Egyptian for Eulogius, and Egyptian into Greek for Anthony."

Here ends the First Book of the histories of the holy fathers which were compiled by Palladius

BOOK II - PART ONE

The Paradise of Palladius: Second History

1. The Triumph of the Blessed Saint Mark The Mourner

MACARIUS THE PRIEST TOLD US THE FOLLOWING STORY, “At the time when I was administering the Holy Offering I took good heed to Mark the mourner, and I never gave it to him, but an angel did so from the altar; I saw, however, the palm of the hand of the angel who gave it to him.” This Mark was a young man, and he could repeat by heart the New and The Old Testaments; he was meek beyond measure and both in body and in thought he was purer than many.

2. The History of Mar Paul the Prince of Monks and Anchorite

CONCERNING ABBA PAULUS THERE WERE QUESTIONS among the monks and Anchorites who were living in the land of Egypt, and they asked who were the first monks who lived in the desert. Some of them remembered the saints of old time, and said, “It has been proved that the first to dwell in the desert

were Saint Elijah the Prophet, and John the Baptist, and it is manifest that Elijah was immeasurably superior in ascetic excellence to the other monks, moreover, John was proclaimed in the womb to be a prophet before he was born." There were many who contradicted this opinion and who asserted with firmness that Saint Anthony was the first, the prince of them all, and also of the order of monks. However, if we wish to learn the whole truth we shall discover that it was not Saint Anthony who was the first monk that dwelt in the desert, but the blessed man Saint Paul. For I myself have seen the disciples of Saint Anthony who buried him, and it was they who related to us the history of the man Paul the anchorite, the Theban, who was indeed the first monk to live in the desert. Therefore we believe that it was not the blessed man Anthony who was the first to do this, as some men say, but Paul, and for this reason I wish to narrate briefly the history of Paul the anchorite, how he began and how he ended his career in the days of Decius and Valerianus the persecutors, and how Cornelius made an end of the strife of his testimony for the sake of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome.

This blessed man Paul dwelt with his sister, who was the wife of a certain man. Their parents died and left them great riches when the blessed man Paul was sixteen years of age. He had been educated in the learning of the Greeks and the Egyptians. He was meek of soul, and he loved God thoroughly. When the persecution of the Christians waxed strong, he remained continually in one place, and he took care of himself at all seasons. The Avarice which constrains the race of the children of men to commit evil deeds did not cease from him, for his sister's husband, instead of hiding him, endeavoured most strenuously to give him up to the persecutors, and he neither had pity upon the tears of his wife nor did he fear the judgement of God; and he desisted not from this iniquitous conduct, but continued in his envy and sought always to give him up because he was a Christian. The wise young man, having comprehended his guile and knowing that he was lying in wait for him, took to flight secretly, he went to a certain high mountain which he found to be not what he desired, and he changed his place of abode on account of the violence of the persecution. As he was living there, little by little he found out in the mountain a rock, in which was a large cave, which was shut in with a stone. Having lifted up the stone he found within great repose, and he looked inside with great desire. He discovered that the cave was clean, and that the dust of the ground also was fair, he loved the place and dwelt there, and gave thanks to God who had given it to him for a dwelling-place. He lived in that mountain all the days of his life, and his food and his raiment were made of the palm trees which were in the mountain. In order that no man may say, "How is this possible?" I take

God and His holy angels to witness that we have seen many monks living in this fashion, and that they have brought their lives to an end in this way, and have not been afraid of Satan.

I must not, however, neglect the history of the blessed man Paul. This holy man lived a heavenly life upon the earth in love to our Lord for one hundred and thirteen years. Saint Anthony, who was ninety years old at the time, was living in another desert. Saint Anthony on one occasion told me the following, "I once thought within myself that there was no man living beyond me in the desert, and on the night where in I pondered upon these things in my mind, it was revealed to me from God by one who said to me, "Beyond you in the desert there is a man who is more excellent than you are, and it is necessary that you should go and see him with all diligence, and with great joy."

When the morning had come, the blessed old man Saint Anthony took the palm branch upon which he leaned his weight, and he began to walk in the desert as his mind directed, because he did not know the way. When it was noon, although the heat of the sun was fierce and burning, the blessed old man did not turn aside from the way, but he said, "I believe that God will not withdraw His hands from me, but will show me His servant concerning whom He has sent me a revelation."

As he was thinking thus about him he suddenly saw a man who possessed two natures, one half of him being that of a man, the other half being that of a horse, the poets call this being a centaur. Then the blessed Anthony called him and said, "I, a man of God, say to you, where do you dwell here?" The creature answered in a barbarous language with words of impurity, and his mouth was full of fear. The old man went on his journey seeking out the way. As Anthony was marveling at this thing the animal passed in front of him as if it were going to a broad field. Anthony knew that it was Satan who had taken the form of the creature in order that he might terrify the blessed man, and he wondered at the similitude of the form which he had seen in the animal. Having passed on a little way further he saw another animal, which was smaller in stature than the first one, he was standing on a rock, and had horns upon his head and on his forehead. When the blessed Anthony saw him he put on the helmet of faith and took the shield of righteousness, and he asked him, "Who are you whom I see here?" The creature answered him saying, "I am a mortal man and one of these who are in the desert, whom the heathen call satyrs, and whom because of their error concerning them they worship as a god." The beast having spoken these words the old man Anthony went on his way, and his tears were flowing and they ran down upon the ground. But he rejoiced because of the glory of Christ, and because of the destruction of Satan, and he

wondered within himself how he had been able to understand the words of the animal. He struck the ground with his staff and said, "Woe to Alexandria! Woe to the city of the heathen, in which are gathered together all the devils of all creation!"

Anthony went on his journey thinking anxiously how he could attain to the end of it. He wished to find the servant of God. Whilst he was meditating what he should do and where he should go, he observed on the flat surface of the desert the footprints of an animal, which had passed over the spot that very day. He meditated within himself, saying, "It is impossible for our Lord to forsake me." He journeyed on his way during the night with his prayers in his mouth continually. When the morning had come he saw a huge hyena, running with all its might up to the top of a mountain, and he followed in its footsteps and having ascended the mountain he came near a cave. He saw the hyena going into it and he looked into the cave and saw perfect love, that is to say, Saint Paul, the old man. He cast away from him all fear and doubtful thoughts. Looking into the cave he saw that there was much light therein. He approached the door of the cave, and knocked it with a small stone. As soon as the blessed man Paul heard the sound of the knocking he rolled the stone down quickly and closed the entrance of the cave. Anthony fell upon his face before the door of the cave and besought him to let him come in, saying, "I am alone; The blessed man Paul answered, saying, "Why have you come?" Anthony said, "I know that I am not worthy to see you. But since you received wild beasts why do you hold the children of men in abhorrence? I have sought and have found thee, and I knocked with confidence; open then the door to me. If this may not be I shall die here, when you see my dead body, do bury it."

When with these words Anthony had taken up his position there the blessed man Paul answered from within saying, "No man who is angry comes in, and no man entreats for admission and makes accusations." Then he spoke to him words of gladness. He opened the door to him, they met and embraced each other and kissed each other with holy kisses. Each man told his fellow his name.

After these things, the blessed man Paul made Saint Anthony sit by his side, and said to him, "Why did you cast upon yourself all this tribulation and the great labor of seeking to see an old man whose body is altogether withered and emaciated? After a short time you will see that I have become dust; but love overcomes all things. Tell me now what is the present condition of the race of the children of men, and whether they are still building houses in the ancient cities, and whether there are still kings in the world, and whether the governors of the world are still in subjection to the error of devils."

Having said these things to Anthony, the two of them looked and saw a raven sitting on the branch of a tree. Straightaway it stood up with great quietness upon the branch, and had in its beak a whole loaf of bread, which it came and laid it down between them, while both men were looking on. When the bird had departed they both marveled. The blessed Paul said to Saint Anthony, "Truly our Lord is merciful and pitiful in that He sends us a meal in this way. For behold, for full sixty years, I have been in the habit of receiving from this bird half a loaf of bread daily, but at your coming, behold, our Lord has sent to us a double portion of food because we are His servants."

Then having given thanks to God, both men sat down at the table, and disputed with each other who should first break the bread. While they were disputing, the night came on. The two men took the bread, spread out their hands, broke the loaf in the Name of our Lord, and ate it. Having eaten, they stood up the whole night in prayer.

When the morning had come Paul said to Anthony, "You must know, O my brother Anthony, that I have been living in the desert for a long time, and that it was our Lord Himself who revealed to me what manner of man you are. But because the time of my rest has come, and because that which I have been seeking, that is to say, that I should depart and be with our Lord, is about to overtake me I could not go to see you. Now that my time has come to an end, and, as I believe, a crown of righteousness has been laid up for me, you have been sent by our Lord that you may bury my body in the ground."

While the blessed man Paul was saying these things Saint Anthony was weeping with many tears and heaving sighs. Saint Anthony made supplication to him, saying, "O my beloved one, do not leave me here, but take me with you, wherever you go." The blessed Paul answered him, saying, "It is not right that you should seek your own advantage, but that of your neighbours. Therefore, O my beloved, I beseech you, if it be not a thing which is too hard for you, go quickly to your monastery, and bring here to me the cloak which Saint Athanasius the Bishop gave you." He did not speak such because he had need of any apparel, but because he wished to depart from his body whilst Saint Anthony was absent.

When Anthony heard concerning the Bishop and his cloak, he marveled within himself. Having looked upon the blessed Paul in our Lord Jesus, he bowed down before him, prayed and set forth to go on his journey. He approached and kissed him on his eyes and on his hands, made haste and went forth to depart to his monastery. Having made the journey and arrived at this monastery, his two disciples, who had been seeking him for a long time, met him, and they said to him, "O father, where have you been these

days?" He answered them, saying, "Woe to me! Woe to me a sinner, for the name of Christian, which I bear, is only a borrowed thing. This day have I seen Elijah and John in the desert, for verily I have seen Paul in Paradise." He was holding converse with them. Saint Anthony struck with his hand on his breast, and took the cloak and went from his disciples, who besought him to reveal to them the whole matter. He said to them, "There is time to be silent, and time to speak." He departed and went forth on his way without taking any provision whatever with him. He made haste to come to the place where the blessed man Paul was, for he desired earnestly to see him again. He was afraid lest while he was yet afar off Paul might deliver himself up to our Lord. He journeyed on his way the first day, but on the second day, at the time of the ninth hour, he saw along the road, in the air, a company of angels, a multitude of the Prophets, the Apostles, and Abba Paul, who was shining with light like the sun, was in their midst. He went up with them to heaven. Immediately he saw them and fell upon his face on the ground. Anthony sighed, wept, and cried out, saying, "O fearer of God, why have you left me thus? Why did not you receive my salutation together with all the toil of this journey, which I have made as swiftly as a bird?"

Saint Anthony went on his way and arrived at the cave. He saw Abba Paul kneeling upon his knees, with his face gazing to heaven and his hands spread out. Seeing him thus Saint Anthony thought within himself, and said, "Perhaps he is alive." He prayed fervently. The blessed Paul also stood up and prayed with him. When sometime had elapsed, he heard neither the sounds nor the sighs, which are customary in prayer, he knew that it was only the body of Abba Paul which prayed. He bowed down before God, in whom everything lives, and placed the body in the middle of the cloak, and wrapped it. He took it on his shoulders and though he sang Psalms, according to the custom of the monks, the blessed Anthony was greatly grieved because he had not remembered to bring with him a spade or some other instrument to dig a grave for the body. He meditated, saying, "What shall I do? If I go to my monastery and bring a spade I cannot possibly return here in less than four days. O Jesus Christ let me also die with Your beloved servant Paul."

As he was saying these things, behold, two lions came running along together. When he saw them his whole body smoked with fear. When he had lifted up his mind to God and had looked at them again, they appeared to be doves flying through the air. The lions drew near and stood beside the body of the blessed Paul. They wagged their tails at the blessed Anthony, and crouched down before him in perfect tameness. They rubbed their teeth together and purred so loudly that the blessed man knew that they wished to be blessed,

to be helped, and that they desired to know concerning the departure of the blessed Paul. After they had acted thus, the lions began to dig a grave, and they threw up the earth with their paws. They made the hole in the ground deep enough, wide enough, and long enough, according to the measure of the body. They lowered their ears and their tails, and bowed down their heads before Abba Anthony. They licked his hands and his feet. He knew that they wished to be blessed. Then he gave thanks for the glory of God because that even the wild and savage beasts knew how to help the good and chosen men of God, and he spoke thus, "O Lord God, without whose command not one leaf falls to the ground, and against whose will not one bird drops into the snare, do bless all of us." He brought his hand near the lions, and commanded them to depart. When the two lions had gone away Anthony took the body and buried it in the customary way. After one day, he took the tunic of Abba Paul, which was made of palm leaves sewn together, like a true inheritance and a thing that brings privilege. Then he departed to his monastery. When he had arrived there he related to the monks the whole matter in due order. On the feast of unleavened bread and at Pentecost Saint Anthony used to put on the tunic of the blessed and holy man Paul, and would pray with it upon him.

I, Hieronymus the sinner, entreat all those who read this book to pray for me. In the text here comes the following note by some editor of Palladius. Concerning these histories of Paul, and of the company of Mark and of Macarius, there are some who say that they were compiled by Hieronymus because his name occurs at the end of them.

Here ends the History of Saint Paul, the Holy Man, the Firstborn of All the Desert Monks.

3. The Triumph of a Young Man who was an Alexandrian

THERE WAS A CERTAIN YOUNG MAN IN ALEXANDRIA, who the law of nature began to work in him to make him possessing the knowledge to distinguish the good from evil. He endeavoured by every means in his power to make himself a wholly stranger to things that are evil, and to cleave to those that are good. Having been trained for a long time, and proficient in the things which befit monks, even though he still lived and he went to the city. He at a certain time thought within himself, saying, "Since there is no good reason whatever to compel me forcibly to remain in the city any longer it is not right that I should do so." He was at all times reminding himself of the word which was spoken by our Lord to the rich man, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell

all what you have, give it to the poor, take your cross and come after Me." The young man said, "The word of our Lord is true, but it is impossible for a man to acquire that perfection which He spoke about, while living among men."

When he had made himself ready to perform in very deed this great thought, he began to journey along the road which leads to one of the deserts of Alexandria, where large numbers of monks used to dwell. He offered up prayer to God that He would prepare a way for him, and would direct him to a man who would be able to help him to attain his object, and would lead him to the destiny he desires. He said within himself, "This shall be to me a sign that the Lord has prepared His way before me; the door where I shall knock, and wherefrom shall go forth one who lives there, and shall receive me in peace, and shall urge me to go in to him, and shall receive me in the the love, which monks have for strangers, that shall be the place, and that shall be the man whom the Lord has prepared for the fulfilment of my thoughts concerning spiritual excellence." He additionally said, "To the man who has been prepared by the Lord it is right for me to be in subjection as to Christ, and I must hearken to his command willingly and unhesitatingly as to that of Christ." As he was saying these words, and was thinking deeply, he arrived in the desert into which he had set his face to go. Having gone in among the monasteries, he found himself by the dispensation of God before the door of a habitation in which a certain old man dwelt. When, according to his expectation, he had drawn near, and knocked at the door, there came out straightaway an old man who dwelt inside. The old man opened the door, when he saw the young man who was standing there he saluted him gladly. When as yet he had asked him nothing whatever, and entreated him urgently to come inside. This actually took place.

After he had gone in and prayed, he sat down. The young man compared the things, which had taken place with those, which he had written down in his mind. He waited for a right issue to all the rest. Then, being full of gladness, the old man urged him repeatedly to partake of food. The young man answered saying, "My lord, I beseech your holiness to permit me first of all to speak openly, and to make known to your fatherly nature the reason of my coming. If through the working of God you will make yourself the perfecter of my desire, and of my thoughts, whatever your holiness and meekness shall command me to do I will perform strenuously."

When the old man had heard these things, he answered him, saying, "You have full power to say everything you wish, joyfully and fearlessly, as to your father who, according to his power, in great love, is ready to fulfil your desire by the help of God." Then, after these words, which the old man spake in

simplicity (now none of the thoughts of the young man had entered into his mind), the young man made clearly manifest before the old man the matters which he had marked out and decided upon in his mind from the beginning of his actions in the city even until that very hour.

When the old man had heard all these things he was greatly moved and disturbed, because he remembered his own former acts and life, and because he was held in contempt by his conscience by reason of the conditions and circumstances under which he was then living, and because that by reason of these he was unable to promise to fulfil the works of which he had then no knowledge whatsoever, he was afraid and excused himself from the task. When he considered his own feebleness, the greatness of the matter concerned, the strenuousness and readiness of the young man, the many other reasons, which he called to mind, he was ashamed to reveal to the young man the true reason for his refusal. Yet nevertheless, because of these reasons, he said that he was unable to act for him. The young man dismissed his objections and made an end of them. He showed him that they all were insufficient to drive him away from the old man, and to do away the fervent desire and aim which were in his mind. The old man felt compelled to plainly manifest before him the true reason for his refusal and to show him that it was not a mere matter of a report of words, but one which could be seen by the actual sight of the eyes. Wishing to fulfil his intention of showing that the true reason was not a mere excuse or one which was fabricated like those which he had previously given, and that it was indeed a true one, and one which would proclaim concerning itself openly, he took the young man by the hand, led him into a certain chamber where his, the old man's, wife dwelt with her two children, and he said to him, "God has sent you here for my shame, and for the condemnation of mine old age. Behold, this is my wife whom Satan and not God has given to me. Behold, these are the children of shame whom I have had by her, and they are the fruits of a contemptible and damnable union."

When the young man saw and heard these things, because the foundation of his building was laid upon the rock of truth, he was neither moved nor disturbed. He was not offended with the old man, and did not regard him with any contempt. After these things the young man said to the old man, "My lord, I entreat your holiness to confirm what I am about to say to yourself. Let me have with you, even as with a real father, a wholly perfect understanding, such as it is right for children to have with their fathers and with their brethren, which shall be free, by the help of God, from all stumbling blocks. Let me have the same understanding with this woman, as with a real mother, and with your children as with beloved brethren." Thus the old man was overcome by means

of all these words by a gracious defeat, and though he wished by the urging of his own mind to give the young man permission to live with him as a disciple, and to fulfil his desire according to the bent of his mind, he was driven far more by the power of the excellence of the young man himself. When these things had taken place they gave thanks to God. They occupied themselves, each one with the service and work that were requisite for their habitation, day by day with the help of God. The young man excelled in works towards the old man, according to his promise, in humility, and in great obedience, the spiritual excellence of his mind was greatly revealed.

One day the old man said to the young man, "My son, do you know that you and I are building this house with weariness and abundant toil, and that we do not have sufficient reeds to make the roof, and that the winter has drawn near? Now, in order that our labor may not be in vain behold, I see that there are reeds in the habitation of the monk who is our neighbour, and since he is not there that we may borrow from him, and supply our need. Go down and take up from there a bundle, and bring it hither so that we may finish the roof, and may rejoice through his forethought." When the brother heard this, he made ready quickly to fulfil the command of the old man. Having gone down and brought what was necessary for them, they completed their work. Then the old man said to that brother, "Tell me truly, O brother, what did you think in your mind about what I said to you, that is to say, that you should go down, and bring reeds as it were by theft, and without the knowledge and during the absence of their owner?" The brother said to him, "As I have already told you, everything that you shall say to me I shall receive as if it came from the mouth of Christ, and shall perform it in faith unhesitatingly. I said within myself, "Christ said to me, you shall not steal, but now it is He who has just said to me, "Steal." I have nothing to do with the matter, and it is Christ to whom I must render obedience." When the old man had heard these words he marveled at the wisdom and at the integrity of his obedience. Wishing to make him to rejoice in his hope, the old man said to him, "My son, you must know that I had made up my mind that we must tell the owner of the reeds what I had done, and must give him whatever price he might require. When I sent you down to bring up that which belonged to him, and I did not do so with the abominable intention of stealing from him."

After a certain time, during which the two men had lived together a correct life full of peace and profit, the old man thought within himself, saying, "It is a great iniquity on my part, and it merits a severe penalty, that I who has grown old in sins, and who am still in the mire of fornication, should dwell with this brother who is perfect in spiritual excellence; for it is not appropriate that

darkness should live with light. But I will leave this abode in his hands, will take away this stumbling block which Satan has set in my way, and these fruits of shame which have come to me from her, and I will go to the world and to those whom I resemble, whose works are like mine own."

When he meditated with these thoughts, he made them known to the woman who dwelt with him. He sent to the village which was near to them, and brought from there an animal to take away what he needed from the monastery, so that he might lead away his wife and his children, and he might go and live in one of the villages around them. When the animal had come, the old man had loaded him with whatever they needed, they, him, his wife, and his children, began to go forth. He said to that brother, "My son, we are not able to dwell in a monastery because our sins are many, and because we are not worthy so to do. It is great wickedness for us to dwell under the cloak of falsehood among monks, while our deeds are more evil than those of the folk who are in the world. Do remain in this dwelling, O my son, The God whom you have loved, and whom you have made plans to please in everything, shall be to you a father, and a fellow monk. Pray on my behalf that the Lord may visit me." When that brother had heard these words, he answered the old man with love and great humility, saying, "O my father, I have made a covenant with the Lord that I will not be separated from you except by death. In as much as my dwelling with you has been to me source of great benefit, there is nothing, which can remove me away from you. Wherever you go, I will go and wherever you dwell I will dwell."

Then after all these things the old man came to himself, and sighed greatly, saying, "Truly, this is a matter which can only come from God, the merciful, who desires not the death of a sinner, but that he may turn to Him and live, and He it is who has remembered my former works, and has not left me to perish utterly, but has sent this young man to me that He might again turn me to Him." Then the old man found himself able by means of words, which were full of strong entreaty, to persuade the woman to take her daughter with her, and to go and dwell in one of the abodes of women which existed in the villages round about them. This actually took place. After the old man had remained there with his son, and with that excellent disciple, he began to remember his former life, and to renew its habits. He excelled greatly in the cultivation of all kinds of spiritual excellences, and gave thanks to God unceasingly, that by means of the young man He had held him worthy of the end of peace. He was always saying, "Truly obedience for the sake of God not only greatly helps those who possess it, but it greatly gratifies God also. Obedience is found by others to be the cause of life, and it torments Satan sorely. On the other hand,

disobedience works what is contrary to all these things. So after a long time that old man died in peace, being worthy of the great measure of reward of his fathers. He departed from the world, and left behind him as upright heirs of his spiritual excellences and of his monastery, namely, his spiritual son, the son who was his according to the body and the spirit; may our Lord through their prayers make us worthy of their spiritual excellence and their inheritance! Amen.”

4. The Triumph of a Certain Old Man Who Was in Scete

THERE WAS A CERTAIN OLD MAN WHO USED TO LIVE in the desert called Scete. He had a disciple who lived with him. This latter brother was adorned with the spiritual excellences of every kind, which befit those who are in subjection to old men. The brother was exceedingly conspicuous for his obedience, which was the greatest of all his virtues. He was sent to the village continually by the old man to sell their work, and to bring back whatever was needed for their habitation. That brother, without any compulsion whatsoever, performed every command given by the old man with zeal and diligence. When Satan, the enemy of righteousness, the foe of the human race, especially of the orders of the monks, the opponent of all virtues the hater of the upright life of the children of men, saw that this brother was overcoming and bringing to naught all his crafty designs by the might of his simple full-of-discretion obedience, he made a plan to lay two snares for him in the path of his spiritual excellence, even as it is said concerning him in the Psalm, as it were by the mouth of those who cultivate spiritual excellence, and who walk in the way of righteousness, “In the way of my steps have they hidden snares for me.” The two snares were the following. The first consisted in making that brother to pursue fornication. The second was in making him to fall into disobedience. The Enemy, in his cunning, expected that the brother would not only be caught by one of these, and so become involved in both, but also that deliverance from the one would be found to be the occasion for his falling into the other, for he saw that he was being sent continually to Egypt by his master on the business of the work of their hands and of the matter of their need.

One day, when that brother was carrying on his shoulders something he wished to sell, he was going to the market of the village according to his custom. It happened that owing to the sight of a woman, who was a virgin, who was continually coming in his way, who bought from him some of the wares which he carried, the war of fornication rose up against him suddenly by the

operation of the Evil. When this thing had thus come to pass the evil cunning of the Devil did not depart from that discreet brother. The brother meditated within himself saying, "Both matters are exceedingly difficult for me. Perhaps, if through some reason such as this which the Enemy has prepared for me, I reject the command of the old man, and do not go up to him, I shall always be in the habit of thinking that I have treated the command of the old man with contempt; and if I do go up to him I shall be oppressed for a very long time with the war of fornication."

When that brother had passed much time in tribulation, and in such thoughts, and in doubts of mind, he did not know which course of action to choose and which to reject. He drew near a certain old man who dwelt close by them, who was great and skilled in all such matters, and made known his business to him, speaking thus, "Father, what shall I do, for the war of fornication has risen up against me? My father sends me always to the village for that which we need. Every time I go to the village I am vexed with thoughts about fornication, through which I am thrown into strife. I know not what to do. If I obey my father, and go to the village, the war is stirred up against me and becomes fiercer. If I remain here and do not go I shall be a disobedient disciple. I beseech you to give me the advice, which shall be beneficial for me. Pray on my behalf, for I am greatly vexed." When the old man had heard these words, he answered him, saying, "My son, if I were you, I should, with God's help, obey my father, and should overcome the war of fornication." Then the brother said to him, "I beseech you, O my lord, to perform an act of grace, teach me the object of this conquest, and help me with your prayers." The old man said to him, "Know, O my brother, that Satan is not so anxious to cast you into fornication as he is to dismiss thee from obedience. To make you disobedient and rebellious, he plots always with exceedingly great care to make you thus. Satan himself has been acquainted with disobedience from the beginning and he knows that it is the cause of every kind of condemnation and of wickedness to those who possess it. O my son, let it be certain to you that, if he vanquish you by means of it, you will be, as it were, stripped henceforth of the help of the power of obedience, and of your father's prayers. Whenever he casts you into the passion of fornication, he will be able to drag you down into passions of all kinds easily. If you do vanquish him first of all in the matter of obedience, and do abide therein undoubtingly, and do believe in the prayers of your father, God will make you prosper in every strife with a crown of righteousness. He will give you victory in every war with the Calumniator. For he who for the sake of God acts in obedience to his father also acts obediently to God. Obedience to God is the victory over all passions. Go, therefore, O my

son, and obey your father faithfully and unhesitatingly. When the war comes upon you say thus, "O God of my father, help me!"

When the Adversary saw that the brother was armed with the wise and powerful words of the old man as with an impregnable coat of mail, and had prepared himself strenuously for the contest, he, the Adversary, changed the method of attack which he had formerly employed. Instead of vexing that brother with thoughts about the woman as he had done at first, he left him, since he was prepared and was sufficiently strong to stand up against him, and went to the feeble woman who lacked both discernment and help for it has been his custom always to run to the weak and sluggish side of disciples, and to overcome the strenuous by means of it and as he overcame Adam by means of Eve, and as he overcame other saints by means of other things, even so did he act towards this marvelous brother who, through this cunning, gained condemnation and shame, even as did Job, and Joseph, and others.

Therefore when this brother according to custom had taken his work, and had readily gone up to Egypt, and had arrived at the village in which he was known to sell it, Satan stirred up that woman to go forth to meet him as it were by chance. Having seen that brother and being inflamed through the operation of Satan with the fire of love for him, she drew near him by means of some crafty device, and took him and brought him to her house, with the excuse that she was going to buy something from him. After they had gone in, she shut the door, and began to throw herself upon him. The brother, with faith in which there was no doubt, cried out with a loud voice and said, "O God of my father, help me!" Immediately, by the agency of God, he found himself upon the road to Scete. By the Divine help the Calumniator was put to shame, the war of fornication ceased from that brother. When he had come to the old man with whom he lived, he narrated to him the whole matter and what had happened. They gave thanks to God and glorified Him who had hearkened to the voice of His servants and had redeemed them out of the hand of their enemies, and had saved them from the snares of the Calumniator. May our Lord hide us beneath the wings of His mercifulness and save us from all the evil workings of the Calumniator! Amen.

5. The Disciple of Another Old Man Who Dwelt Alone in a Cell

ONE OF THE AGED MEN SAID, "I have heard from certain holy men that there have been youths who have led and guided old men to life. They told me the following story: 'There was a certain old man who used to plait

mats of palm leaves by day and sell them in the village in the night, and get drunk with the money he received for the sale. At length there came a certain brother who took up his abode with him, and also worked at the plaiting of mats by day. The old man took his work also and sold it, and got drunk with the money, which he received for the work of both, and he would bring home with a little bread for that brother. Though the old man did thus for a period of three years the brother said nothing to him about it. After these things the brother said to himself, "Behold, I am naked, and I only eat my bread by forcing myself to do so. I will therefore arise and depart from this place." Again he thought within himself, saying, "Where have I to go? I will stay here a little longer, for I can live to God just as well as if I were in a monastery where many monks are." Straightaway the angel of the Lord appeared and said to him, "Do not depart to any other place, for tomorrow we are coming to you." Then that brother made supplication to the old man and entreated him, saying, "I beseech you, O my father, do not go forth this day to any place, for the angels are coming to receive my soul." When the hour had arrived for the old man to go out and sell the work according to his desire, he said to the brother, "My son, they will not come today, for they have elayed too long." The brother said, "Yes, my father, indeed they will come." While he was talking to the old man he died. When the old man saw what had happened he wept and sighed deeply saying, "Woe to me! Woe to me, O my son! I have lived in faith for many years, but you have gained life for yourself through a short period of patient endurance!" From that day forward the old man led a life of sobriety and became a chosen monk."

6. The Triumph of the Disciple of an Old Man in the Desert

THERE WAS A CERTAIN DESERT MONK who was very anxious to find a quiet suitable place for him to dwell in. There was a certain old man who had a cell near him, and he entreated him, saying, "Come, take up your abode here until you find a cell suitable for you." He went there. The brethren used to come to him as a stranger. They brought him food in order that they might be helped by so doing. He rejoiced in them and gave them relief. The old man began to envy him, and to heap abuse on him, saying, "Beold, how many are the years where I have lived here in the strictest abstinence, and yet no man came to me. Yet to this deceiver who has only passed a few days here many come!" This old man said to his disciple, "Go and say to him, Depart from that place, for I have need both of the place and of the cell." His disciple went

and said to him, "My father, speak some words and pray for me because I am greatly vexed by my stomach." Then he came to his master and said to him, "He said to me, I see a cell and I am going forth."

After two days the old man sent his disciple to him again, and said to him, "If you have not departed I will come myself and drive you out with a stick." The disciple came to the monk and said to him, "My father has heard that you are sick and he is greatly grieved. He has sent me to visit you." The monk said to him, "Through your prayers all is well." The disciple came and said to his master, "I have spoken to him, and he said to me, "Wait until the first day of the week, and I will, by the Will of God, go forth." When the first day of the week has come, the monk had not departed. The old man took a stick and was going forth to beat him, and to drive him out. His disciple said to him, "Let me go first, lest there be some stranger who will be offended at your act." Having gone before his master the disciple said to the monk, "Behold, my father has come to entreat you to leave and to take you to his cell." When the monk heard of the old man's love, he made haste to go out to meet him, expressed his sorrow afar off, and said, "Do not be vexed, O my lord and father, for I was coming to your holiness. Forgive me for the sake of Jesus." God saw the work of that disciple, and He opened the mind of the old man. He threw away his stick and ran to salute the monk. Having drawn near to him, he gave him the salutation of peace, and took him into his cell. The stranger had heard nothing whatsoever of the words which had been said by the old man. Then the old man said to his disciple, "Perhaps, did you say to the monk what I said to you?" The disciple said to him, "No, father, I did not." The old man rejoiced greatly, brought him in to the stranger and treated him kindly. The old man knew that what had taken place in him had been caused by the working of Satan. He fell down before his disciple and said, "Hence forward you shall be my father, and I will be your disciple, for through your good works, after God, you have helped the souls of two men."

7. The Triumph of Peter, the Disciple of one of the Old Men

THERE WAS A CERTAIN OLD MAN who had an excellent disciple. On a certain occasion the old man by reason of his hasty temper drove him away, turned him outside the door, his apparel with him. The brother sat down outside the door and waited patiently. When the old man opened the door he found him sitting outside. The old man repented, saying, "O Peter, the meekness of your long suffering nature has vanquished my hasty temper. Henceforward

you shall be my old man and father, and I will be your servant and disciple. By your good work you have made my old age."

8. The Triumph of a Disciple of One of the Old Men

ON A CERTAIN OCCASION THE DISCIPLE of a great age had a war of fornication. When the old man saw that his brother was vexed and oppressed in his mind, he said to him, "Do you wish me to entreat God to make the war less fierce?" The brother said, "Father, I perceive that, although I toil and am afflicted, I am yet able to see the fruit which I possess within my soul through this strife, therefore pray not for this thing, but entreat God especially in your prayer to give me strength to endure." His father said to him, "This day I know that you have surpassed me."

9. Of Aurelius

I USED TO KNOW A MAN IN JERUSALEM whose name was Aurelius, and by race came from the city of Tarsus. When this man arrived in Jerusalem, he walked wholly in the path in which there are no stumblings and in that which not many have walked. He laid down for himself ascetic rules of life of new kinds, these were so severe that the devils were afraid of him, and they were unable to stand up before him. By reason of the greatness of his toil he might have been thought to be a shadow, for he would pass the whole weeks of the Forty Days in fasting. He would spend the other days in constant vigils. The greatest of all his acts of asceticism was this. While the brethren were gathered together each evening in the house of prayer, he would go up to the highest peak of the Mount of Olives, to the place where our Lord was lifted up, and as he stood there upon his feet he would recite the whole Office. Whether rain, or snow, or sleet fell he would never leave his place. When he had finished the Office according to his custom, he would take a hammer and beat a board, and rouse up those that slept, and having gone round to the doors of all the monks he would gather them together to the places for prayer. In each place he would recite the Office with them. He would also stand up in the midst of companies of monks, and would recite the Office. In the daytime he would go to his cell, and in very truth on several occasions his brethren had to strip off his clothes from him because they were completely wet, and to put others on him. He would rest until the third hour of the day, and then would come to the service

in the church and stay until the evening. Such was the manner Aurelius lived. In this way he brought his life to an end. He was buried at Jerusalem.

10. Of Abba Moses the Ethiopian, a Captain of Thieves

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN whose name was Moses, was by race an Ethiopian, and his skin was black. He was the slave of a man in high authority. Because of his evil deeds and thefts his master drove him out of his house. It is said that he even went so far as to commit murder. I am compelled to mention his wickedness in order that I may show forth the beauty of his repentance. People say concerning him that he was even the captain of a band of seventy thieves. The following thing used to be related about him, and he is said to have committed it during the period in which he passed his time in stealing.

He had as an enemy a certain shepherd, against whom he remembered certain evil things. He went to steal sheep from his flock. The shepherd was told by a certain man who said, Moses has crossed the Nile by swimming, and he holds a sword in his hand, and his clothes are placed on his head; and he has crossed the river by swimming. The shepherd covered himself over with sand, and hid from him. When Moses had come and did not find the shepherd, he chose out two fine rams from among the sheep and slew them. He tied them together with a rope, and swam across the river again with them. Having come to a small village he skinned the rams and ate the best portions of them. He sold the remainder for wine, and drank. After these things he went back to his companions. One day, while he was associated with them in doing hateful things, his senses came back to him in the morning season. He repented of his evil acts, and rose up and fled to a monastery. From that time he drew near to works of repentance so closely that the devil who had made him sin from his youth up, and who would have continued to make him sin, would stand before him in visible form and would look upon him. Thus he came to the knowledge of our Lord Christ.

About him, Moses the Ethiopian, they tell the story that thieves once came and went into his cell, because they did not know who he was. He tied them all together with cords and lifted them up on his shoulders like a bag of chopped straw. He brought them to the church to the brethren, and said to them, "Since I do not have the power to do evil to any man, what do you command me to do to those who rose up against me to slay me?" At that time Moses had been fasting for seven days, and had eaten nothing. After he

had done this he informed the thieves, saying, "I indeed am Moses who was formerly the captain of a band of thieves." Having heard this they praised and glorified God. When they saw the sincerity of his repentance they also removed themselves from their evil deeds, and said within themselves, "Let us also draw near to repentance, so that we may become worthy of the forgiveness of sins, even as he also is worthy."

Whilst fasting often, and during the time of prayer and silent contemplation, that devil of error, who brings back to the remembrance of the mind the wickedness of former habits, would come to him, and tempts him to such a degree that, even as he himself has told us, it wanted exceedingly little to make him fall from his covenant. Having come to the old man Isidore the great, who had arrived from Scete, Moses told him concerning the war of his body. The old man said to him, "Do not be distressed, for these are the beginning of the birth pangs, and they come upon you seeking what they are accustomed to receive, even as a dog which comes continually to the cook. If a man gives him nothing he will not go there again. Thus also it is with you, for if you will continue in fasting, in prayer, and in silent contemplation, the devil will straightaway fall into despair and will flee from you."

From that time he was exceedingly constant in his work of spiritual excellence. He ate nothing whatsoever, except ten ounces of dry bread daily when he was doing work. He would recite from beginning to end fifty prayers during the day. The more he dried up his body, the more he was vexed and consumed by dreams. Again he went to one of the old men, and said to him, "What shall I do? For thoughts of lust which arise from my former habits attack me." The old man said to him, "These lead you into error because you have not turned away your heart from the similitudes of them, but give your heart to watching and careful prayer, and you will be free from them." When he had heard this direction he went to his cell, and made a covenant with God that he would neither sleep during the whole night nor bend his knees. He dwelt in his cell for seven years, and remained standing the whole of each night with his eyes open, and never closed his eyelids. After this, he set himself other ascetic labors, for he would go out during the nights and visit the cells of the old men, to take their waterskins and fill them with water, because they lived a long way from the water, about two miles, some say four miles, and others say five miles. One night he went to fill the water skins with water, according to his wish. As soon as he had bent down over the spring, a devil struck him a blow across his loins as with a stick, and departed leaving him half dead. Moses understood who had done this thing to him. On the following day one of the brethren came to fill the water skins with water, and he saw the blessed man

lying there. He drew near to him, asking, "What has happened to you?" When Moses had told him the story, the brother went and informed Abba Isidore, the priest of the church of Scete. Abba Isidore sent brethren immediately, took him up and brought him to the church. He was ill for a long time, and never thoroughly recovered from his illness. He never again enjoyed the health of body he had possessed formerly.

Abba Isidore said to him, "Rest yourself, O Moses, do not fret yourself against the devils, and do not seek to make attacks upon them. There is moderation in everything, even in the works of ascetic life." Moses said to him, "I believe in God, in Whom I placed my hope, that being armed against the devils I must not cease to wage war with them until they depart from me." Abba Isidore said to him, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, from this time forward the devils shall cease from you. Draw near then, and participate in the Holy Sacraments. You shall be free from all impurity both of the flesh and of the spirit, for you must not boast within yourself, and say, 'I have overcome the devils, for it was for your benefit that they have waxed strong against you.' Moses went back again to his cell. After two months, Abba Isidore came to him, and asked him concerning himself. Moses said to him, "I never see now anything which is hateful to me." He was also held to be worthy of the gift of Divine Grace, and he could chase away the devils from many folk who were vexed therewith, and as flies take to flight before us so did the devils depart from before him. Such were the ascetic labors of the blessed man Moses, who was himself vexed with great matters. He also became a priest, and left behind him seventy disciples who were men of worth. When he was a thief he had as followers seventy men who were thieves, and these became his disciples, and were perfect in the fear of God.

11. Of Abba Pior

THERE WAS AN EGYPTIAN YOUTH named Pior. Pior was a holy man. When he departed from the house of his parents he made a covenant with God with the zeal of excellence that he would never see again any of his kinsfolk. After fifty years, the sister of this blessed man, who was very old and grey, heard that he was alive. She greatly desired to see him. She was unable to come to him to the desert, and besought the Bishop, who was in that country, to write to the fathers who lived in the desert telling them to urge him, and to send him to see his sister. When the blessed man saw the pressure, which came from them to make him go, he took with him some brethren, and set out to

go on the journey. Having arrived he sent and informed his sister's house hold, saying, "Behold, Pior your brother has come, and stands outside." When his sister heard his voice, she went forth in great haste. When Pior heard the sound of the door, and knew that the aged woman his sister was coming forth to see him, he shut his eyes tightly, and said, "So and so, I am your brother; look at me as far as you can do." Having seen him she was relieved in her mind, and gave thanks to God. She was unable to persuade him to enter into her house. He made a prayer by the side of the door with his eyes closed tightly, and departed to the desert.

He also wrote the following wonderful thing, "In the place where he lived he dug a hole in the ground, and found water which was bitter in taste. Until the day where he died, he endured the bitter taste of the water, in order that he might make known what he suffered patiently for the sake of God. After his death many of the monks wished to abide in that place. They were not able to do so, even for one year, chiefly because of the terrible nature of the country and its barren nature.

12. Of Abba Moses the Libyan

THERE WAS ALSO ANOTHER OLD MAN whose name was Moses, who came from the country of the Libyans. He was exceedingly meek and compassionate. Through this he was held to be worthy of the gift of healing. This old man himself related to us the following story, saying, "When I was a young man dwelling in the monastery, we dug out a large cistern which was twenty cubits wide. Eighty men were digging it out, and we set seventy men to build walls round it. They dug down according to their knowledge, passed the place where they expected to find water, and went down even one cubit more. They did not find water. Being greatly distressed at this we wished to abandon the well and go away. When Abba Pior came from the desert at noon, being an old man, he was covered in his head-cloak, he saluted us, and said to us, "Why have your spirit lessened, O you of little faith? For I observe that your spirit has diminished since yesterday because you have not found water." He went down by a ladder to the bottom of the well, and made a prayer with the men. Having prayed, he took up an iron tool and drove it into the earth three times, saying, "O Lord God of the holy Fathers, do not make the weariness of these men to be in vain. Send them water in abundance."

Straightaway waters sprang up in such quantity that they all became wet. Having prayed a second time, he went forth and departed. When they urged

him to remain with them and eat he would not be persuaded to do so. He said to them, "The matter concerning for which I was sent is accomplished. I was not sent to eat."

13. Of Certain Distinguished Wandering Monk

THE COPYIST ADDS THE NOTE: We have found the story of this wandering monk and recluse following that of the recluse John of Lycus.

There was a certain distinguished wandering monk who (as have heard from the famous monks who dwelt by the side of the country of Antinoe [currently Ansenal]) lived a life of great sanctity in the mountains. He helped many folks both by word and deed. The Enemy had envy of him, even as he has of every good man, and he cast into his mind thoughts, which appeared to be humble, saying, "It is not seemly for you to be ministered to and treated with honour by others, for you should minister to yourself. Go therefore to the city and sell your plaited baskets yourself, and buy whatever you have need of, and lay no burden upon any man." The crafty one counselled him in this wisdom because he was envious of the assistance which he obtained from the silent contemplation and constant prayer, and because he kept God in his mind, and he was laying nets for him, and was trying to snare him by every means in his power. The monk, being convinced as it were by a counsellor of good, for he was not greatly skilled in the knowledge of the cunning and of the abundant wickedness of him that was lurking in ambush, went down from the mountain. The brethren marveled, because he was a wandering monk, who was well known and famous. Thus in a short time, through want of care and also through converse with women, he was caught in the toils and fell.

He came to the river Nile in a desolate place (now there was with him the Enemy who had cast him down and who rejoiced because of his fall, and because many folk would be made to offend through hearing it). Because he had greatly grieved the Spirit of God, the Angels, the holy Fathers of the same class as himself, having become unlike any of those who in the cities and everywhere else had overcome Satan; and because he had forgotten that great might was near to him that fighteth against the Enemy, and who truly has his hope in the Lord, because, I say, he forgot that this help existed, he fell into error, and did not know how he was to be healed, and wished to throw himself into the river flood and die. Moreover, although his body was brought exceedingly low, through the suffering of his soul, it would have been in vain had not at length the mercy of God helped him not to die (which would have

afforded perfect joy to the Enemy), and it urged him to depart again with weeping and bitter suffering of heart, and, as was right, to make supplication to the compassion of God. Thus, having returned to his place and blocked up the window of his cell, he wept, as was right, after the manner of one who weepeth in a suitable manner over a dead person, and he reduced his body to emaciation by means of his fasting, and vigil, and grief, for the expectation of his repentance had not as yet come to him.

On several occasions, when the brethren came to comfort him, and knocked at his door, because he had no excuse to make he would say, "Pray for me, O my brethren, for I have made a covenant to live a life of silent contemplation all my days, having everything of which I have need." Then they would go away having no hope whatsoever for him. He was a monk who was very precious in their sight. From Pentecost, when the brethren were in the habit of relaxing their severe rules of life, when they ate freely now because of his fall that monk did not act thus onwards, throughout the whole year until the feast of unleavened bread, he prayed with tears, and he vexed sorely the life of his flesh, and was crucified with Christ. But on the eve of the day of the Resurrection, at the rejoicing of the holy First Day of the week, he took a new lamp, and trimmed it ready for lighting. He set it in a new vessel likewise, and covered it over. Being unable to stand up in prayer, he said, "O You Merciful One, Who desire that the Barbarians and all the people who are without God should have knowledge of You, and should turn to You, and Who alone art the true Physician of souls, have mercy upon me, for I know that I have made You wroth not a little. I have obeyed the Enemy even to my death and, behold, I am a dead man. O You Who did teach the children of men who were not merciful to show mercy to each other, O have mercy upon me! For to You nothing is impossible, even though I be brought down as as low as the dust in Sheol. But You are the Lord of Your hosts, and You are He Who is good to those whom You have created. You are He who shall raise up the dead bodies of those who have no being, and Who shall make them to have being in the Day of Resurrection. Answer me because my heart and body are sick, for I am overcome by the fear of You and am ready to perish, and I cannot live any longer. Because as yet I have no confidence in my repentance, a two-fold destruction I have in my despair. Show compassion upon me, O Merciful One, and kindle this lamp by Your light, so that I by means of it may receive the encouragement of Your mercy, and may pass the remainder of my life which You will bestow upon me in the way which shall please You, and may never again as long as I live be unmindful of the fear of Your Commandments."

He said these things with tears on his face. He rose up to see if the lamp

had been lighted. He uncovered it, and saw that there was no light in it. He fell upon his face as he had done before, and he besought the Lord frequently, saying, "O Lord, You know that the strive has taken place and that it is ended, and You will not require especially that I should be disgraced by crying out with the wicked, and that I should suffer torture forever. Have mercy then upon me, and I will confess Your goodness. I have been ashamed before the righteous angels. If it were not that it would cause scandal, I would make my confession to the children of men. Therefore have compassion upon me, for from this time forward I will teach others that their hearts must not be outside Your fear, even for a moment; and now I make supplication to Your goodness. O make me to live, and I entreat You so to do, for I am about to die." The monk prayed in this manner three times, and then he was heard by God, for when he went back the fourth time to see if the lamp had been lighted he found it burning brightly. He was strengthened with hope, and rejoiced, wept abundantly, marveled at Divine Grace, and he made prayer to the Lord about this also, saying, "You did show compassion upon the life of this world of him that is unworthy, and especially by the great and new sign which You have given. Yes, Lord, You always show Your compassion upon the miserable soul, and spare it." The monk continued to give simple thanks until the day dawned, and he rejoiced in the Lord, and forgot the food of the body. He tended the light of the lamp everyday, and poured oil in it. He trimmed it from above, and kept it covered so that it should not be extinguished. Thus that man became like one who had risen in the resurrection of the righteous, and like the chaste man, and like the humble man in the Spirit of God who obeyeth readily, and who gives gladly to the Lord gratitude and thanks. When he was about to yield up to the Lord the soul which had been graciously given to him, he related the story gladly to the brethren who happened to be there, that it might cause them fear, saying, "Let that lamp be placed in my grave in commemoration of my repentance." We, who heard concerning the grace of God, have written down these things in order that men may be watchful in the Lord.

14. The History of the Blessed Evagrius, the Solitary Monk

IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE THAT WE SHOULD VEIL the history of this holy man in silence. We must set it down plainly in writing, both for the help and edification of those who shall come across it. For the glory of God Whose wish is to change bitterness to sweetness, we shall, therefore, make clear the

history of the blessed man from the beginning, and tell how he journeyed step by step to the goal of spiritual excellence, how he was carried onwards to the ascetic life, how he arrived at purity of heart, and how he departed from this world at the age of fifty-four years. This blessed man came from Pontus, where his family lived. His father held the office of visitor. The blessed man Basil, Bishop of Caesarea, appointed him to be a reader. After the death of the blessed man Basil, Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus, seeing his perspicacity and his great skill in the Divine Books, and that he was free from passions, and adorned with virtues, brought him near to the grade of the priesthood. He went up to the synod, which was held at Constantinople with the blessed man Gregory, who loved him greatly. When the blessed man Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, met him, he was drawn to love him, because he saw that he was a man of strong character, and attached him to himself. Evagrius was beloved by all men, and was held in honour by all men. For this reason Satan was envious of him, and disturbed his understanding through the vision of his mind, which he set in a blaze through the love of a certain woman. This woman was the wife of one of the noblemen of the city, according to what he himself related to us. When, by the will of God, he was set free from these thoughts, the woman herself began to love Evagrius. She was a great lady of high degree.

Then Evagrius, setting before his eyes the reproach of fornication, prayed to God with labor that, in His Grace, He might bring this matter to naught, and that he might extinguish the mad lust of that woman; to chide her himself the blessed man was not able, because he was bridled by the large numbers of gifts which he had received from her. His prayer having been heard, when as yet he had not had union with her sinfully, an angel appeared to him in the form of a soldier of the prefect, who seized him, cast him into prison, and who loaded his neck and his hands with chains. He did not inform Evagrius for what reason he had to bear this ill treatment. The thought sprang up in his mind, which said, "Perhaps that woman's husband has laid an accusation against me before the judge." Evagrius found himself in great agony of mind, because he saw that other men, who had been committed to prison for offences similar to his own, were condemned to judgement before his eyes. The angel changed his form, and appeared to him in the guise of one of his friends, and he began to say to him, when he saw that he was loaded with chains and had been placed with the malefactors, "What is this that happened to you, O brother?"

Evagrius answered to him, saying, "My brother, in truth I do not know. I think that perhaps some prince of the city has laid an accusation against me before the judge, because of some vain jealousy (or envy), which has burst into

flame in him. I am afraid lest, through a gift of much money, the judge may issue a decree of death against me.” The angel said to him, “If you will receive the words of your friend I counsel you not to remain in this city.” The blessed Evagrius said to him, “Do you think that you will see me in this city if God will deliver me from this trial? You mightest as well think that I am enduring these evils righteously!” The angel said to him, “Swear to me that you will depart from the city, and will have a care for your soul, and I will deliver thee from these trials.” Evagrius took an oath to him by the Book of the Gospel, saying, “I will not tarry here more than the one day which will be necessary for me to put my things in the ship.”

When Evagrius woke up from his sleep, he thought within himself and said, “Although the words of the oaths have been uttered in a dream, it is right that I should fulfil that which I have promised.” So he put his things in a ship and departed to Jerusalem, where the blessed woman Melania received him gladly. Melania had come from the city of Rome. Because Satan had made the heart of Evagrius as hard as that of Pharaoh, he failed to call to mind that which he had promised to do, and he went back to his former habits and returned to his pride. He was arrayed in filthy garments. But God, because He is in the habit of bringing to naught on our behalf things of evil, kindled the fire of a great fever in Evagrius, and He cast him into a sickness which lasted for six months, and none of the physicians was able to bring healing to him. The blessed woman Melania said to him, “My son, your long illness does not please me. Tell me, then, concerning it, for perhaps there is something hidden in your mind. Your illness is not like that of every other man.” Then Evagrius confessed to her the whole matter. Melania said to him, “Promise me truthfully that from this time onward you will take care of yourself in a habitation of monks, and that you will work to God. However great a sinner I may be, I will pray for you, and relief shall be given to your tribulation.” Then he promised to do that which she required at his hands. Before few days had passed by the blessed man was healed, and he rose up from his bed, and from that day his whole mind was changed.

He departed to the mountain which is in Egypt and which is called Nitria, and dwelt there for two years. In the third year he departed to the inner desert, and dwelt there for fourteen years in the place, which is called The Cells. He lived on one pound of bread a day, and a box of oil every three months. He had been a man great in pomp had made great his body, and had been ministered to by slaves. Yet he laid down a rule that he should pray in the course of each day one hundred prayers. He lived by the labor of his hands, and he only accepted the bare price of his daily food for all the work he did;

and his work was to write books. Before, however, the fifteen years had passed by, he had cleansed his heart, and was held to be worthy of the grace of God, and wisdom and understanding were given to him, and he knew the power of spirits. He composed three volumes, and taught us therein the cunning of devils the snares laid by the thoughts.

The blessed man Evagrius related to us that the devil of fornication once made an attack upon him, and that he stood up naked the whole night long in the desert (now it was the season of winter), until his flesh was quite shriveled and dried up. The devil of blasphemy on another occasion made an attack upon him, and according to what he told us, he passed forty days under the open sky in winter until his flesh became like that of the beasts of the desert. He also told us that once three devils came to him in the daytime, in the form of three members of a religious body, and they began to discuss the faith with him. One of them declared himself to be an Arian. The second said that he was a Eunomian (i.e. a follower of Eunomius, Bishop of Cyzicus, AD 360-364). The third confessed himself to be of the seal of Apollinarius (Bishop of Laodicea; he died about AD 390). By the Divine Grace within him he drove them away, having put them to shame.

Again he told us that one day he lost the key of his cell, but he made the sign of the Cross over the door and then put in his hand and opened it, having called Christ to his help. He was beaten with innumerable stripes by the devils. He learned by experience very much concerning their cunning. He made known to one of his disciples by prophecy that which should happen to him after a period of eighteen years, and he said actually what would happen. He said, "From the time when I entered the desert I have never washed, and I have never eaten any vegetable, or any fruit, or any grapes." At the end of his life, that is to say, in the sixteenth year in which he departed from the world, he ate compulsorily food, which was cooked by fire. He was obliged to do this because of a weakness of the stomach, which had overtaken him. He was compelled to take cooked food because of this.

15. The History of Malchus the Solitary Monk

ABOUT THREE MILES FROM ANTIOCH IN SYRIA there is a certain village called Maronia. In this village was an old monk whose name was Malchus. He was a wonderful and a holy man. At that time I had travelled far away from the house of my fathers, and went to Evagrius the priest, where I heard concerning the holy man Malchus. I desired greatly to see him and to be blessed by him. I

went to him, and he received me gladly, and began to tell me about the habits of life the works of the monks, and how it is right to fear the Lord. Having rejoiced greatly in the pious words of his doctrine, I besought him to confirm me especially in such things. Then he said to me, "My son, I will relate to you concerning the temptations, which, in proportion to my presumption and thoughtlessness, have come upon me, in order that they may help you, and also concerning the compassionate grace of the Lord God who took me out of and redeemed me from them, and who permitted them to come upon me for the correction of many who should learn of me, and should not become disobedient to the exhortation of their spiritual fathers, because disobedience is the cause of death."

Having said these things, he began to narrate to me his history, saying, "I was born in the village of Nisibis. I was the only child of my parents were proud of me because I was the only child they ever expected to have. When I had arrived at manhood's state, they were anxious to marry me to a wife. I spoke against their wish, saying, "It is right for me to become a monk and to serve the Lord." They were exceedingly wroth with me. My father urged me to marry and threatened me with penalties if I did not, and my mother was always inciting and counselling me to do so. Seeing that their minds were most firmly set upon this, which would be to me an impediment to my confession of the faith before God, I forsook them, and treated all the riches of this world with contempt. I took with me only a very small sum of money, which was just sufficient for the expenses of my journey. I wished to go to the monasteries of the east. Because at that time the Greeks had determined to make war upon the Persians, I changed my intention, and made up my mind to go to the west. While I was pondering this matter, I learned that between Keneshrin and Aleppo there was a monastery, which was situated in a peaceful spot. I gave up my former intention, and went there. I asked them to receive me, and I remained with them. I wrestled with all their ascetic habits and rules of chastity according to their godly ways of life. I made good progress therein in the Lord.

Having remained in that monastery for a certain number of years, and having lived blamelessly the life of spiritual excellence, all the brethren rejoiced at the growth of my asceticism. Because the Calumniator, that jealous and envious being, could not endure this, he cast into my mind thoughts which were apparently correct ones, saying, "Since your father is dead, return to your house, and comfort thy mother so long as she is alive. After her death sell your possessions, and give some of proceeds to the poor. Keep the remainder to build a monastery. You yourself shall become a father and governor of monks."

To tell you the truth, my son, the Calumniator cast within me the passion of avarice, saying, "Keep some of the money for your old age." When the war, which was caused by these thoughts had been waged against me daily for some time, I felt obliged to reveal this sickness of my soul to the spiritual father. When the holy father heard these, he said to me, "My son, do not hearken to your feelings. This is a snare of Satan who, by means of this cunning device, has put many monks backward in their course, even as a dog goes back to his vomit, and has cast them down and has made them lose their inheritance, and who, though continually setting before them the hope of that which is good, has nevertheless brought them down into Sheol. For having raised Adam to a height of error, which resembled this, he brought him down to the bottom of Sheol. Our Lord commands him that has laid his hand upon the plough not to turn back."

When by means of such testimonies which he brought from the Holy Scriptures he was not able to persuade me to stay. He, thus, fell down before me and wished to swear by the Lord that I would not forsake him. Whilst that merciful and pious father was saying these things for my deliverance, the Enemy was placing in my heart the words like, "The father does not act thus because he would show compassion on you. He wishes that the whole community of the brethren may be glorified by thy staying here." By saying words of this kind to me, that evil adviser made me to gain a victory of wickedness, and he made me to come forth out of the monastery. Still clinging to me, as to one who was lost, the father said to me, "My son, I see that you are consumed by love of money. The sheep which goes out from his flock without his shepherd straight way becomes a prey to wolves." I left him after he spoke these words to me.

Then I went from Aleppo to Edessa by the king's highway. Being afraid of the soldiers (i.e. bands of marauding robbers), who had already taken up their abode in the countries nearby, I remained in Edessa, hoping to find a companion for the journey, as this was my watchful fear. When we had gathered together a company of seventy men and women, we set out on the road. Suddenly a band of Arab soldiers swooped down on us, and carried us all away. I called to mind the exhortation of the holy father, said to myself, "O my soul, such are the great riches which I went out to inherit! O I the wretched man. Such are the promises of the Enemy, the deceiver and destroyer of souls! Inherit thy wealth then, O wretched one, and make yourself happy with." As I was saying these things to myself, one of the Arabs took me with a certain woman. He set the two of us on one camel, and having travelled a short distance in the desert, because we were afraid lest we should fall from the camel, we were compelled to hold tightly to each other. Not only did this shame come on my

unconvinced mind, but I was also obliged to eat with her. The Arab gave us milk and camel's flesh. He carried us to his tent, and commanded me to do homage to his wife and to bow down before her, saying, "This is your mistress." Through these things I, the chaste man and monk, was becoming acquainted with the form of the nakedness of these people, according to the reward, which my passion of avarice merited. The Arab ordered me to gird myself about with woollen garments and to shepherd the sheep. This occupation became to me a source of consolation for the tribulations, which surrounded me. After few days I was released from the evil faces of my masters and companions. But this alone did not bring me consolation, for I remembered that Abel, the Patriarch Jacob and his sons, the holy man Moses, and king David were shepherds of sheep. I rejoiced in the desert, pastured the sheep, prayed, and sang the Psalms, which I learned in the monastery. I used to eat cheese made of goat's milk, and drank milk. I gave praise to God, that I had obtained such a light penalty for my disobedience. Remembering that the Apostle said, "Servants, be submissive to your masters, not only to the good, but also to the wicked," I took care of my master's sheep with the utmost diligence. In all these things I kept in mind always the envy of the Calumniator who hates good.

When my master saw that I was acting rightly towards him, he wished to reward me well therefore. He wanted to marry me to that woman who had been taken captive with me. When I spoke against his proposal, saying, "I am a monk, and I cannot do this. Besides, this woman has a husband who was taken captive with us, but has become under another ownership." His wrath went up, drew his sword, and set his gaze upon me. He would have killed me, but it I ran and took hold of his wife's hand. Having married me to the woman, he brought me into a cave with her. When therefore, I knew that this was indeed the captor of my soul, I cried aloud and wept saying, "Woe to me the sinner! What has happened to me? For having grown old in the life of virginity, a terrible evil now comes on me. I must, become the husband of a wife! Where is my mother? Where are the possessions and riches of my fathers? For because I was not persuaded to perform the obedience of the servants of God, because I separated myself therefrom, and because I forsook the Lord I must endure things of this kind! What will you do, O my wretched soul? For if you conquer by patient endurance, by the Grace of God you will be held worthy of help. But if you are lax severe punishment is laid up for you. Fight then mightily against sin. Turn the sword against yourself, that you keep the testimony of chastity. Hold in contempt the fire of time that you may flee from the fire of eternity. Conquer your sin in the desert, that you may be a persecuted and chosen witness."

Then I took the sword in my hands, and saluted that woman, saying, "May you remain in peace, O wretched woman. Acquire for yourself rather a martyr than a husband. I would not marry a wife, as I fled from and forsook my parents." When the woman saw the sword which was shining in the darkness, she fell down before my feet and said to me, "I will make you swear by Jesus Christ, the Lord of praise, that you will not kill yourself for my sake. If you wish to do this turn the sword against me. Why should you wish to kill yourself so that you may not take me to wife? Know that I am far more anxious than you are to preserve my chastity to Christ. I must guard it not only against you, but also against my lawful husband, for even if he were to come I would keep myself chaste. This is what this captivity in which I am teaches me. For this affliction should teach us to take refuge in the Lord. Take me then to yourself as a companion of your chastity. Let us love each other in spiritual love, so that when our masters see us they may think that our intercourse is carnal. God, Who knows hearts, recognizes spiritual brotherhood, and we can easily persuade these people when they see us together in this wise that we love each other." Then, while marveling at the understanding of the woman, I received her good advice gladly in Christ. I loved her as a spiritual help, and as a pure and chaste helper. I never saw her body naked, and I never approached her couch, for I was afraid lest, having been victorious in the time of war, I might receive a severe wound through the arrows of the Enemy in the time of peace. In this wise then our masters left us for a long time, and they were not afraid that we were preparing to run away from them, for it happened on several occasions, sometimes for a whole month together, that I was alone with the woman in the desert. My master used to come. When he saw that I was taking good care of his sheep, he would go back to his place rejoicing.

One day, according to my custom, I was sitting in the desert. I began to meditate upon the peaceful life of the brethren who were in the monastery. I saw also the face of our holy father as if it had been an image. I thought of his perfect and abundant love for me, how anxious he was in every way that I should not be separated from him, how I would not be persuaded to stay with him by the Divine revelation, and how he bore witness beforehand concerning the things which would happen to me. While, then, I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I saw an ants' nest. I saw multitudes of these insects working with the greatest diligence and care in their various ways. I saw how they were all making their way into the nest through a narrow entrance, without impeding each other. Some of them were bringing seeds for their winter food; others were bringing loads which were larger than their bodies; others were carrying on their backs those which had

been wounded; and others were expelling from the nest those which had settled themselves inside. They were cutting them up into small pieces, lest being drenched in the winter they should have to return to the grass, they should die of hunger and be destroyed. Others were carrying dust, so that when the winter rains fell with violence they might be able to block up the entrance to their nest firmly. This sight was in my opinion worthy to wonder at, because everything, which these small creatures did was done in perfect order. I spent the whole of the day in watching them, and so enjoyed some relaxation from my afflictions. I said, "Well, did Solomon counsel us to be like these creatures, for he wished to stir up our lazy and sluggish understandings in this wise to perform with a ready mind the things which befit our redemption."

While I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I began to have sorrow concerning myself, because my lazy and sluggish mind lacked the great sense of order and arrangement which the ants possessed, and also the faculty of not being disturbed by thoughts of laziness, which the brethren possessed in common with the ants. My sorrow was also because the Calumniator had hunted me down like a child, had set me in captivity, and had hurled me into such great temptations. I thought of those who were offering their souls with all their hearts to Christ, and who were being guided on their way in all the monasteries by submission and spiritual grace, through the righteous redemption of our Redeemer, who were anxious to preserve their souls blameless, and who were laboring diligently and without any hindrance and with all their strength to do their work, and to minister to one another; and who were not saying about any possession which was theirs, It is mine, and who had everything in common; and who carried out perfectly the manner of life, which is described in the Acts of the Apostles, according to which no man said about any possession that it was his, everything was in common. Who, though possessing nothing, yet possessed everything. Who enjoyed sufficiently that which they had for their daily needs, with all fear or with all praise, and glorified Him who richly provided them with everything.

Having made my heart sad and low with such thoughts for many days, I went to that woman, who seeing how greatly my countenance was changed, entreated to be allowed to learn the cause of it. Having confessed to her that it was because I had remembered the regular life of the brethren, and that I wished to escape and return to the monastery out of which the Enemy had made me to come, she advised me and besought me to take her with me and to place her also in a nunnery. Having together decided on this plan, we wept and entreated our Lord to help us to carry out what we had determined and to deliver us from that wicked people. Therefore, having firm hope in God's

assistance, we took thought for our return, and I slew two large goats, and made their skins into water bottles. Having loaded their flesh upon our shoulders, I took the woman, and we departed. We travelled the whole night long, and came to an exceedingly great and wide river. I blew up the water bottles, and gave one to the woman and kept the other myself. We laid hold upon them with our hands. Sitting astride of the skins we paddled with our feet, and crossed over the river. Then, seeing that we should have to cross a desert in which there was no water, we drank abundantly of the water of the river. We rose up from that place and went on our way quickly. We were turning round continually to look behind us because of our horrible expectation that there would be men pursuing us, and that even if we could escape from them we should fall into the hands of wicked men like to them.

Because of our fear of the heat of the sun, we were obliged to travel by night. Urged by this great fear, and by our great anxiety, we were looking behind us ceaselessly. After traveling for five days, we turned round suddenly, and saw our master and one of his companions, riding upon camels, and holding drawn swords in their hands, and pursuing after us. By reason of our fear the sun appeared to us to become dark. Whilst we were in this terrible state of fright, we did not know where to escape. Through the Providence of Christ, the Hope of the hopeless, The Help of the helpless, we peered about in that place and found a frightful cave in the ground, where in had gathered all the numerous kinds of snakes, serpents, asps, vipers, and scorpions, which had gone therein because of the burning heat of the sun. In this cave we tottered, and hid ourselves in a corner, on its left hand side. We said, "If our Lord help us this cave shall be to us a house of deliverance; but if He leaves us to the sinners it will be our grave."

When our master and his companion following in our footprints had pursued us to the cave, they alighted from their camels, and stood by the mouth of the cave. When we saw our master, such great fear laid hold upon us that we were unable to move our tongue to utter a word. Owing to the greatness of our fear we were already as dead men, before the sword stroke fell upon us. Our master stood outside the cave and called us. We were unable to speak because of our fear. He took hold of the camels, and commanded his companion to go in and bring us out, whilst he stood outside waiting for us with his sword drawn, so that he might by means of it quell his brutal madness. When the young man had gone into the cave for a distance of five paces, he stood still. Because he had come in from the outside, his eyes had become dazzled by the light of the sun, and could not see. We being quite near him could see him standing there, however, because he was unable to see us he began to terrify

us with his voice, saying, "Come out, O you wicked slaves who deserve death, why do you delay? Behold, your master is outside expecting you." As he was saying these words, we saw a lioness rise up on the right hand side of the cave, and she sprang on him. Whilst he was yet speaking, she seized him by the throat and strangled him and then dragged him in and laid him on her lair, for she had a male cub. When we saw our enemy lying there before our eyes, we glorified God with great joy. His master, not knowing what had happened, and thinking that the young man had been overcome by us, and being unable to contain himself for rage, ran forward, holding his drawn sword in his hand, and, standing at the mouth of the cave, cried out in his wrath to the young man, saying, "Quick, quick, bring these slaves out to me that they may die an evil death." Whilst he was speaking, the lioness sprang upon him suddenly, and ripped him up, and threw his head long on the ground.

We marveled at all these unspeakable and inexplicable wonders of the Lord, and we gave thanks to Him, and we rejoiced in the glory of Him who in this tribulation had risen up, and by Whose command the wild beast had destroyed our enemies. When the lioness turned back and passed from one side to the other of the cave where we were, we thought that she would destroy us, but, because of the wonderful thing which had been wrought, we continued to praise the Lord, and we said, "Since the Lord has delivered us from those wicked men He can, if He wills, hand us over to the lions; but nevertheless let us praise Him and give thanks to Him." Whilst we were thus thinking in our minds, the lioness took up the cub in her mouth, and departed from the cave, and left the place to us; but after she had gone, because of the state of fear in which we were, we remained the whole of that day in the cave.

In the morning we went out and found the camels that were still laden with provisions, which our master had brought for himself and his slave. We ate and drank therefrom, and for all these things we gave thanks to the Lord, Who had delivered us from our enemies. We rode upon the camels, and crossed that desert in ten days. We arrived at a Greek camp, and drew near to the Tribune who was in command of it. We related to him everything, which had happened to us. He sent us on to Sabinus, the Duke of Mesopotamia. He likewise learned all our affairs, took the camels and gave us their price. He dismissed us to depart to our country in peace. Before our return, my spiritual father fell asleep. I placed the woman who had been my helper, who had given me excellent advice, and had counselled good actions in an abode of virgins. I returned to my own monastery and to my spiritual brethren, where at the beginning the Lord directed me. I related to that blessed brotherhood the story of all the things which had happened to me, and I confessed that it was

because I had not hearkened to the admonition of that holy father that the Lord left me so that all these trials might come upon me; and He did this for the correction of many.

Therefore, O my son, all these trials, which came upon me because of my disobedience, and which I have narrated before you, are intended for the edification of your soul; get you possession of them, because, by the help of God, patient endurance and implicit obedience will deliver a man from all temptations. Obedience to the commandments of God is everlasting life, the patient endurance, which is perfect, produces everlasting life in us. "For he who endures to the end shall live." These things did the old man Mark [Malchus] himself relate to me while I was a young man, and on account of the law of brotherly love I have written them down because they befit the chaste life of holy old men, and tend to their edification and admonition; do then relate them to those who are young, so that they may learn that those who have drawn near to the venerable estate of pure chastity, and who have preserved the same for Christ's sake even to the end, and who are protected by His power, shall overcome all the temptations of the Enemy. Neither captivity, nor the sword, nor any temptation, shall be able to overthrow those who have preserved in all purity and holiness the temple of Christ without spot and blemish, even to death, and they shall become holy temples, The Spirit of God shall dwell in them, and notwithstanding all the words of the Calumniator, He shall bestow victory upon them, for ever and ever. Amen.

16. Of Two of the Fathers Who Went Naked

ABBA MACARIUS, THE EGYPTIAN, once came from Scete to the mountain of Nitria to the Offering of Abba Pambo. The fathers said to him, "Speak with the brethren, O father." He said, "I am not yet a monk, but have seen monks. For once when I was sitting in my cell at Scete my thoughts said to me, "Go out, get into the desert, and consider intently what you will see there." I remained five years in struggling with my thought, and trying it, lest it might be from Satan. Since the thought continued with me, I rose up and journeyed into the inner desert, and I found there a fountain of water with an island in the middle of it. The beasts of the desert used to drink therefrom, and I saw in the midst of the beasts two naked men; then fear took up its abode in my limbs, and I thought that they were perhaps spirits. When they saw that I was afraid they spoke to me and said, "Do not fear, we are also men." I said to them, "Where are you from? How have you come to this desert?" They said

to me, "We were once in a large monastery. The desire of both of us was the same. We went out and came here, where we have been for forty years. One of us is Egyptian and the other is Libyan." They also questioned me, saying, "What news is there in the world? Do the waters of the river come as usual? Is the world flourishing?" I said to them, "Yes." I also asked them, "How can I become a monk?" They said, "Unless a man makes himself to be remote from everything which is in this world he cannot be a monk." I said to them, "I am feeble and I am not able to do as you do." They said to me, "If you cannot do as we do sit in your cell, and weep for your sins." I asked them, "When it is winter are not you frozen? In the season of the heat are not your bodies consumed?" They answered me, saying, "God in His Providence has made us to be so that in the winter we do not freeze and in the summer we are not burnt up." It was because of this that I said, "I am not yet a monk, but I have seen monks. Permit me to be silent."

16. Also Of a Certain Old Man Who Went Naked

THEY USED TO SPEAK OF A CERTAIN SOLITARY MONK who went out to the desert carrying his apparel on his shoulder. He had gone a journey of three days, climbed a rock, and saw below him an old man who was grazing like the beasts. He came down secretly and gave chase to him. The old man was naked, and his soul had diminished to such a degree that he could not bear the smell of men. He was able to remove himself from them and to make his escape by flight. Having taken to flight that brother pursued him, and cried out to him, saying, "I am following you; for God's sake wait for me." Then the old man answered him, saying, "I, for God's sake also, am fleeing from you." Finally, casting away from him the garment, which was on his shoulder, he pursued him with all his might. As soon as the old man saw that he had cast away his garments he waited for him. When the brother came up with him the old man said, "As you did cast away from you the things of the world I waited for you." Then that brother entreated him, saying, "Speak to me a word of advice that I may be redeemed by." The old man said to him, "Flee from the children of men, keep silence, and you shall live."

17. Of a Certain Naked Old Man Who Fed With the Beasts

A CERTAIN BROTHER CAME TO THE MONKS who lived in that spot where were twelve wells of water, seventy palm trees, and where Moses and the people of Israel encamped when they went out from Egypt. That brother told them the following story, saying, "I once had it in my mind to go into the inner desert and see if there was any man living therein. I went a journey of four days and four nights. I found a certain cave. Having approached it I looked inside it. I saw a man sitting in there. I knocked at the door according to the custom of the monks, so that he might come out to me, and I might salute him. But he never moved, for he was dead. I did not hesitate or draw back, but I went in and laid my hand upon his shoulders. He crumbled into dust and became nothing at all. In wonderment I came out of that place and journeyed on again in the desert."

I saw another cave by the side that had traces of men. I plucked up courage, and drew near to it. I knocked and no man answered me. I went inside, found no man, then came outside. I said within myself, "The holy man will soon come here." When it was evening, I saw a number of beasts, which are called buffaloes. The servant of God was in their midst, naked; and his hair was used as a covering for his shame. When he saw me, he stood up in prayer, for he thought that I was a spirit. He was greatly vexed by an evil spirit, as subsequently he told me. I understood this matter, and said to him, "I am a man, O holy one. Look at my footprints and touch me, for I am flesh and blood." After he prayed, and I had answered, "Amen." He looked at me, took heart, and brought me into his cave, asking, "Why did you come here?" I said to him, "That I might be blessed by the servants of God have I come into this desert." He has not deprived me of my desire. I also asked him, "How did you come here? How do you live?" He began to speak to me thus. I was once in a monastery where my work was to weave linen. The thought came to me that I would leave it and dwell by myself. My mind said, "You will be able to live in seclusion, and to entertain strangers with the results of your labor. Your wages will be more than enough for you." I agreed with my thoughts, and I carried them into effect. I built a habitation, and took up my abode therein. Men used to come to me and carry away my work. While I was doing thus, giving my work for the benefit of strangers and the poor, Satan, the Enemy, with his envy cast his arrows at me. Instead of the reward of my labors which I expected to be rewarded. He flattered me by causing a certain virgin to come to me, with the excuse that she wished to buy the labor of my hands. I gave her what she wanted. Satan stirred her up with one excuse or the other. She used to always

coming to me. When she had been accustomed to come and acquired freedom of speech with me, she began to come near me. She would take hold of my hands, and laugh. She was so bold as to eat with me. Subsequently we conceived and brought forth iniquity. Having lived with her in this fallen condition for six months I thought in my mind that whether it was today, or tomorrow, or at some future time, however far off that time might be, I should be delivered over to everlasting torment. The man who takes out of her house the wife of another man, and seduces her, is delivered over to the punishment of the Law. How much greater then will be the punishment of the man who has seduced a woman who has been betrothed to Christ? Straightaway, I determined to come to this desert, and leave everything I had behind me. I went out secretly, and and found this cave, this fountain, and this palm which is in front of it, which produces twelve clusters of dates each year. It thus yields each month what is sufficient for me for the whole month. After some time the hair of my body grew long and my clothes wore out. My hair covered my bodily shame. I have now been here for thirty years. The air always supplies me in moderation with what is necessary.

I questioned him further, saying, "Was your mind disturbed about anything during the first years of your life here?" He said to me, "I was greatly afflicted at first, and I used to throw myself upon the ground by reason of pain in my liver. I could not stand up to say my prayers, but was obliged to make my supplications to God lying on the ground. While I was in this tribulation, I saw a man came, stood by my side, and said to me, "What is your pain?" At these words I gained a little strength, and I replied, "My liver troubles me and causes me pain." He said to me, "Show me where the place is." Having shown him, he spread out his fingers and his hands, and slit up my body as with a sword, he took my liver and showed me the sore on it. Then he removed the pain. Having made the place whole again, he said to me, "Behold, you are healed. Serve Christ, your Lord, as is appropriate for Him." I have been healed since that day and lived here without any pain.

I entreated him to permit me to live in the first cave, in which I saw the dead monk. He said to me, "You are not able to endure the attack of the devils." Knowing that what he said to me was right, I entreated him to pray for me and to dismiss me. I have narrated this story to you, O my brethren, so that we may be zealous in the spiritual life and its works of excellence. May you attain the everlasting life; may our Lord in His grace and goodness make us worthy to receive it!

18. Of Another Holy Man

A CERTAIN OLD MAN, who was held worthy to be the Bishop of a city in Egypt, told the following story (which he tried to make one think he had heard from another man, but he himself had actually done the things which he described).

Once, there came to me the thought that I would go into the inner desert which is over against Ovov, that I might see if I could find therein any holy men who worshipped Christ. I took with me food and water for four days. I set out on my journey. After four days my food came to an end, and I wondered what I should do for more. I plucked up courage and committed myself to God. I went on for another four days, when I became so weak that I could not stand up any longer. Through hunger and exhaustion I had no strength in me. I became sick in spirit and threw myself on the ground. A certain man came and drew his finger across my lips. Forthwith, I became so strong that I thought that neither fatigue nor hunger had ever drawn near me. As soon as I perceived that strength come to me I rose up again and continued my journey for four more days. Once more I became weary, and stretched out my hands to heaven. Behold, that man who had given me strength before, drew near to my lips and made me strong. I continued my journey in the desert after this for seven more days. I found a booth with a palm tree and water by the side of it. There was standing there a man, the hair of whose head was quite white, he made clothing for himself, and his face was awesome to look upon. On seeing me, he stood up in prayer. When he prayed and I answered, "Amen" he knew that I was a man. He took hold of my hands and questioned me, "How did you come here? Does everything in the world still exist? Are the Christians being persecuted?" I said to him, "By the help of your prayers, for in truth you serve God, I have travelled and come into this desert. By the power of Christ, the persecution of the Christians is at an end." In turn I said to him, "Father, tell me how did you come here." With sighs and tears he began to say his story. "I was a bishop. During the period of the persecution, many sufferings came upon me. Finally, because I could no longer bear the tribulations, I sacrificed to idols. Having come to my senses, I recognized the wickedness, which I had committed. I made myself come to this desert that I might die here. I have passed forty-nine years here in making supplication to God for my folly, and entreating Him to forgive me the sin, which I sinned. God gave me life from this palm tree. I did not receive any encouragement to hope for the forgiveness of my sins until the completion of forty-eight years."

After he said these things, he rose up suddenly and went outside the

booth. He stood up for many hours in prayer. When he finished his prayer, he came to me. As I looked upon his face, fear and wonder fell upon me, for it was a face as of fire. He saw that I was afraid. He said to me, "Do not fear, for the Lord has sent you to me that you may bury my body." As soon as he finished speaking, he stretched out his hands and feet and died. I took the garment, which I had on me and tore it in two, and in one half of it I rolled him up and laid him in it in the earth. The other half formed my apparel. As soon as I had buried him, the palm tree dried up. The booth fell down. I made many entreaties to God, and prayed to Him to leave me the palm tree, so that I might pass the rest of my life there. This did not take place, so I perceived that it was not the will of God that I remain here. I prayed, and returned to the habitation of the children of men. Behold, that man who had given me strength before, came again to me and gave me courage. Thus I arrived and came to the brethren. Having related to them these things, I encouraged them not to be in despair about their souls, but to feel that in patient endurance they would find our Lord.

19. A Certain Solitary Monk Who Used to Feed on Grass by the Jordan

A CERTAIN MONK WAS FEEDING ON GRASS BY THE JORDAN. At noontide, he went into a cave to rest. He found there a lion, which began to roar. He said to the lion, "What vexes you? There is room enough here both for you and for me. If you do not wish for a companion, get up and go out." Because the lion could not bear him, he rose up, and went out.

20. Of a Certain Holy Virgin

ONCE, A CERTAIN GROUP OF THE GREAT SAGES OF SCETE were travelling along a road in the desert when they heard a sound, like the groan of a sick person, rise up from the ground. They searched, and found a path, which led into a cave. When they descended into it, they discovered there a certain holy virgin. They said to her, "O mother, when did you come here? Who ministers to you?" They saw nothing in the cave except the holy woman herself, who was lying on the earth. She said to them, "Behold, I have passed thirty-eight years in this cave and I have satisfied my wants with grass. I labor for Christ. I have never seen a man except this day. God has sent you to me this day to bury my body." Having said these words, she died. When the fathers

saw this, they glorified God. They buried her body, prayed, and departed from the place.

21. Of the Two Young Men who were with Macarius

ABBA BYTINIUS SAID THAT THE DISCIPLE OF MACARIUS once told me the following story:

Abba Macarius once said to me while I was living in Scete, two young men, who are strangers, have gone down there. One of them has few hairs as a beard. The other has the beginning of a beard. These young men came and said to me, "Where is the cell of Abba Macarius?" I said to them, "What do you seek from him?" They said, "We have heard of his life and deeds. We have come to see him." I said to them, "I am he." They offered me repentance, and said to me, "We wish to abide here." Seeing that they were proud because of their riches, I said to them, "You will not be able to dwell here." The elder of them said to me, "If we are unable to dwell here, we will go to another place." I said to myself, "Why should I be an occasion of stumbling to them, for the labor itself will make them flee?" I said to them, "Come, make a cell for yourselves if you can." They replied to me, "Only show us how to do it, and we will do it." I gave them an axe, a tool for digging up the ground, and a sack of bread and salt. I showed them a rock wherefrom they might hew stone. I said to them, "Hew your stone from here, and then bring wood from the forest and roof over the place, and then take up your abode." I thought that they would straightaway take to flight, but they said to me, "What is your work here?" I said to them, "The weaving of palm leaves." I plucked some leaves from the palms in the grove, and showed them how to begin to work to plait baskets, saying, "Give them to the guardians, and they will give you bread." From that hour I left them, everything I said to them they performed with great persistence and diligence.

They remained there for three years and never came to me. I continued to debate in my thoughts, saying, "What kind of work is theirs that they never come in to me to ask me for anything?" The people that are afar off come to me, but these who are close by do not come to me. They have gone nowhere else, except to the church to receive the Offering when they have leisure. Then I prayed to God and fasted for a whole week that He might show me their work. Straightaway I rose up and went to them that I might see how they were. When I had knocked, they opened the door to me, saluted me, and then held their peace. I prayed, and sat down. Then the elder of the men motioned to

the younger, who went outside, sat down, and plaited ropes, and said nothing. At the season of the ninth hour, he knocked at the door. The younger man came and made a sign to him. He went out and cooked a little food. He made another sign to him, and he prepared a table with three bread cakes upon it, and then stood by in silence. Then I said, "Arise, let us eat." They drew near and we ate. One of them brought an earthenware pitcher of water, and we drank. When the evening had come, they spoke to me, saying, "Are you going away?" I said, "No, I am going to pass the night here." Then they laid down a palm leaf mat for me on one side of their cell, and they threw themselves down upon the bare earth on the other side of the cell by themselves. When I had prayed to God to inform me concerning their toil, the roof was opened. The place became as light as it was in the daytime. They did not see that light. Then, thinking that I was asleep, the elder man struck the younger, and they rose up, girded up their loins, spread out their hands to heaven; and I saw them. They did not know that I could see them. I saw the devils hovering about over the young man like flies, and some of them wished to settle on his eyes, and some on his mouth. Behold, the angel of the Lord was going round him, and was driving away from him the devils with a sword of fire. The devils did not dare to approach the elder man. About the time of morning the two men threw themselves on the ground and I made myself to appear like one who just woke up from sleep. They likewise feigned to have only then become awake. The elder man spoke to me these words only, "Do you wish us to recite twelve Psalms only?" I said to him, "Yes." The younger man recited five Psalms out of each of the six Pethgdmd, and one Huldld. At every Pethgdmd a lamp of fire came out from his mouth, and went up into heaven. Similarly, when the elder man stood up and recited the Psalms there went out from his mouth as it were a rope of fire, which ascended into heaven. I could only recite the Psalms little by little. I came out and said to them, "Pray for me." They excused themselves, and were silent. I learned that the elder man was perfect, but that the Enemy still waged war against the younger man. After few days the elder man died. Three days later the other man died also. Whenever the fathers came to Abba Macarius, he used to take them to the cell of those brethren, and saying, "Behold, the martyrdom of these little strangers."

22. Of Abba Bessarion

THE DISCIPLES OF ABBA BESSARION used to relate the story of his life and deeds in the following words. The mode of the life of this old man was

that of the bird of the heavens, of the things, which are in the waters, and of the creeping things of the earth. He passed his whole life in peace, and tranquility. No anxiety as to the condition of his cell was ever present with him. His soul was never occupied with the desire to live in certain places. He never ministered during the whole course of his career to the satisfying of himself with food. He never gathered together or laid up for himself possessions in clothes or books. He was free from care about everything, which concerned the body. He rejoiced in the hope of the good things, which were to come. He was firm and immovable in the foundation of his faith. He followed the ascetic life strenuously. He wandered here and there, like one possessed in the season of frost he went naked. He was consumed with heat under the fierce rays of the sun. At one time he lived among the rocks and at another, in the desert. If it happened that he came to districts, which were settled or to a place where a congregation of monks passed their whole lives together in the fulfilment of the rules of monasticism, he would take his seat contentedly outside the door of the monastery.

Once, having arrived at a certain monastery, he sat down outside the door, wept and wailed aloud after the manner of one who had been saved from a storm at sea. When one of the brethren had gone out, he found him sitting there like any ordinary poor man or beggar. Having drawn near him compassionately, he said to him, "What makes you weep, O man? If you need any of the necessities of life, so far as in my power, I will give it to you. Rise up then, and get inside the monastery. Comfort yourself with the blessed companionship of the table with us." Then the blessed Bessarion answered him, saying, "Until I find the possessions of my house which I lost. The numerous goods of the house of my fathers, which I lost in sundry and divers ways, I cannot live under a roof. For pirates fell on me at sea, and a storm rose up against me. I have been short of my riches, and from being a man of high degree. I have become the object of contempt." That brother was astonished and grieved at these words. He went in, brought out some bread, and gave it to him, saying, "Father, take this. The other things, which you have mentioned, like, country, family, and riches, God shall restore to you." Abba Bessarion cried out more, with louder cries, and lifted up his voice, saying, "I do not know if I shall be able to find what I lost, and what I seek, for as far as I can see they will be removed from me even further. I am afflicted daily, and am brought near to death by reason of the violent storm of wickednesses innumerable, which surrounds me. I endure them and rest upon hope that, perhaps, I may be worthy of mercy in the day of judgement."

23. Of the Wonderful Things, Which Abba Bessarion Wrought

ABBA SHAOUL, (OR DULAS) THE DISCIPLE OF ABBA BESSARION, used to say, “We came once to the bank of a lake and I was thirsty.” I said to Abba Bessarion, “I am thirsty.” The old man prayed, and said to me, “Take water from the lake, and drink.” I went, drank, and I found the water to be sweet. I drew from the lake and filled all the water vessels, which I had with me. I thought that, perhaps, I should be thirsty again when I continued my journey. Then the old man seeing me do this, said, “Why did you fill these vessels with water?” I said to him, “Forgive me, father, but I did so lest, perhaps, as we continue our journey, I may become thirsty again.” He said to me, “May God forgive you, for here, and there, and everywhere, God directs us.”

On another occasion, he was travelling along a road, and came to the river Chrysoroan. There was nothing to aid in crossing the river. He stretched out his hands, and prayed. He crossed over to the other side. I was astonished, and I offered to him repentance, saying, “Father, when you were passing over the river how far up had your legs feel the water?” He said to me, “I felt the water as far as my ankles. But all the rest of it was solid beneath my feet.”

On another occasion, we were journeying to a certain great sage. The sun was near to set. The old man prayed, saying, “I beseech You, O Lord, to let the sun abide in his place until I come to Your servant.” It was so.

Once, I came to him in his cell that I might speak with him. I found him standing up in prayer. His hands were stretched out to heaven, and he remained standing up in this position for four days and four nights. Afterwards, he called me, and said, “Come, my son.” We went out on the road. Being thirsty, I said to him, “My Father, I am thirsty.” Then he moved himself from me the distance of a stone’s throw. He prayed and came to me, bringing with him his garment filled with water from the air. I drank, and we travelled on our road until we came to Lycus to Abba John. After each had saluted the other, he prayed, and sat down. He discoursed concerning the vision, which he had seen. Abba Bessarion said, “A decree of judgement has gone out from the Lord, that all the temples of the idols be blotted out.” This actually happened, and all were uprooted.

There was in Egypt a certain man, whose son was paralytic. He took him on his shoulders, brought him to Abba Bessarion and left him by the door of his cell weeping. The father departed and went to a place some distance off. The old man heard the sound of the weeping of the young man. He looked out, saw him, and said, “Who are you and why are you here?” The young man said, “My father brought me here, then went away, and I wept.” Then the old man

said to him, "Rise up, hasten after him, and overtake him." Immediately, the young man became healed, went to his father, who took him and departed.

On another occasion, a man who had a devil came to the church. Prayer was made on his behalf in the church, but the devil did not go out, for he was difficult to cast out. The clergy said, "What shall we do about this devil, for no man can cast him out except Abba Bessarion? Let us entreat him concerning the man, and even though he does not come to the church, let us act thus. Behold, the old man comes to the church early in the morning before everyone else. Let us make the sick man to occupy the seat in which the old man sits usually. When he comes in, let us stand up in prayer, and say to him, "O father, make to rise up this man also." They did so. When the old man came into the church in the morning, they rose up in prayer, and said to him, "Father, make to rise up that brother." Abba Bessarion went and struck him with his fist, saying, "Rise up and get out." Straightaway, that devil went out from the man, and the man was made whole immediately.

24. The History of a Holy Man Who Possessed Nine Virtues

THE FATHERS USED TO SAY CONCERNING a certain brother who lived in a large monastery that, having contended mightily, and having been helped by God, he had made himself master of nine virtues. He was exceedingly desirous of making them ten, but that in spite of many contendings he was unable to do so. The Enemy, according to his custom, cast his arrows at him. Both by day and by night Satan vexed and troubled him in order that he might depart from the monastery in which he was. Satan advised him, saying, "In another monastery you will be able to complete the ten virtues." The brother, not understanding the cunning of the Evil, was led by his thoughts, which seemed to incite him to further spiritual excellence. He departed and went to another monastery with the expectation that he would find what he sought. Having been received into the other monastery, after a very short time, through the contending of the Calumniator, he lost one virtue. Once again the Calumniator cast into his mind the thought that he would depart from that monastery, although he remembered his promise, and said, "You have not only found what you seek, but you have also lost what you had." Then the brother, being sad and sorry about what happened to him, departed and went to another monastery, with the expectation that he would be able to both acquire the lost virtue, and to add another virtue. Whilst the brother was working and contending to acquire that lost virtue, and the one he wished, the

Calumniator, through his wicked craftiness, made him lose another. He did the samething to him on several occasions. The Evil made him to go out from one monastery to another so often that the brother at length lost four virtues.

The brother wandered here and there in a state of great agitation. He arrived to a certain monastery and rested himself. He leaned against the door of it, in dejection of spirit, cried over himself, and wept because of what happened to him. Having rested a little, he determined to go into that monastery in order to be received into it. He told himself of all the things, which happened to him, and all the trials, which attacked him in the previous monasteries. He passed judgement on his soul, saying, "Are you able to bear all the trials, which are in this monastery?" His soul answered, saying, "I place my trust in the mercy of our Lord who He will give strength to my weakness, and that I shall endure them." Then, deciding these things in his thoughts, the brother wrote them all down on a piece of paper, placed them in his girdle, and strengthened his thoughts to go into the monastery that he might be received by.

After being received, he lived in the monastery for a short time. He began to have freedom of speech with the brethren, and with the archimandrite. Temptations began to assail him. He took out the written paper, which was placed in his girdle, read it, and felt relieved. He continued to do so when temptation assailed him. The brethren marveled because he was not perturbed when they were, for on several occasions, when the brethren of that monastery were in a state of excitement, he had not permitted himself to be agitated with them in the smallest degree. They wished to know the reason of this. One day when the monks were agitated and disturbed by a quarrel, which was so serious that the matter nearly came to a murder, that brother took the paper, and looked at it. As he was reading, it one of the brethren watched him. When the tumult was over, the brethren saw that he was not agitated. They marveled, and said, "What is the meaning of this thing? Why is not that brother as excited as we are?" The brother who watched the monk reading his paper revealed to them the matter, saying, "He has something in his girdle. On account of it, he remains undisturbed." The brethren enquired the matter, and found that it was as the brother had said.

They approached the archimandrite, saying, "If you do not expel this brother, we will not remain here, and we will go forth, because he is a sorcerer. Behold, his sorceries are in his girdle." The archimandrite promised to expel him. The archimandrite delayed the expulsion of that brother. One night, while he was asleep, the archimandrite went to him and took the paper from his girdle. He read it and rejoiced with a great joy. After reading the paper, he put it back into the girdle of the brother. Neither that brother nor any other

man knew what happened. After a short time the brethren, through the agency of Satan, were greatly disturbed by a very serious quarrel. That brother was in no wise agitated. When they saw that he was not disturbed at all and wholly tranquil, they rose up against the archimandrite, saying, "If you do not expel this brother we will all depart from here." Then the archimandrite called the brother and said to him, "What is this that your brethren are saying against you? They are bringing an accusation against you." The brother expressed regret, saying, "Yes, father, all their words are true. Permit me to repent." The archimandrite replied, "But they say that you are a sorcerer." The brother said, "Yes, I am even as they say, but I beseech your piety, O father, that you will allow me to repent here." The archimandrite said to him, "But they say that thy sorceries are in your girdle." The brother, being unwilling to reveal his spiritual excellence, fell upon his face before the archimandrite, took hold of his feet, made supplication to him, and wept with groans and sighs, saying, "Do not expose me, O father. Forgive me for this once only. I will repent with all my soul." The archimandrite, who knew that great advantage would accrue to the whole brotherhood, would not be persuaded by him, but commanded that his girdle be loosened. He himself took it and brought out from there the paper. He then ordered that all the brethren be gathered together, and that the paper be read in a prominent place, so that all of them might hear. After the paper had been read the brethren repented, and fell upon their faces before that brother. They entreated him, saying, "Forgive us, O father, for we have sinned against you." Thus that brother benefited the whole brotherhood, and they regarded him as a father.

25. Of the Blessed Woman Maria

THERE WAS A WORLDLY MAN WHO WISHED to become a monk. He had a little daughter whom he thought to take her with him to the monastery. She was a maiden. He entreated her, saying, "If you wish to become a nun let me take you to a house for virgins." She said to him, "I cannot be separated from you." She wept night and day and begged that she might not be separated from him. The father, being much distressed, made up his mind to take her with him. He changed her name to conceal her identity as a maiden. Her name had been Maria, but her father gave her the boy's name of Maryana. He committed the matter to God. He took her and went into a monastery without anyone perceiving that Maryana was a girl. After several years Maryana's father died after performing the excellent works of the monastic life. The archimandrite

saw that Maryand was working hard, and excelling in spiritual excellence. He rejoiced in him, not knowing that he was not a boy. He commanded that he should not be sent out on the highways to beg because he was a child. The brethren were envious against Maryana because he did not go out on the highways with them.

When the archimandrite saw that the brethren were envious against Maryana because he did not go out on the highways as they did, he called to Maryana and said to him, "Since the brethren are envious against you because you do not perform the work on the high roads as do they, I command you to do so." Maryana fell down before the archimandrite and said to him, "Whatever you command me to do I will do gladly, O father." The brethren of the monastery who lived with Maryana, whensoever they went out on the high roads, they visited a certain believer, in order to rest a little and to refresh themselves. Since Maryan was sent out, even according to what had been ordered by the archimandrite, the believing man whom the brethren visited saw him, (for he knew all the brethren of the monastery because he used to go to their monastery continually). The believing man saw Maryana at the evening. He took him and brought him to his house to rest there for the night. The believing man had a daughter. On the night where Maryana stayed with him, a certain man seduced her, had fallen upon her and seduced her. He, then, commanded her, saying, "If your father said to you who has seduced you, say to him, it was Maryana the monk." As soon as Maryana had departed from them, the father knew that his daughter had been seduced, and asked her, saying, "Who has seduced you? She said to him that Maryana, the monk, has seduced me." Then the father rose up straightaway, and went to the monastery. With tears he spoke before the archimandrite and the whole brotherhood, saying, "What offence have I committed against you that you seduced my daughter?" When the archimandrite heard this he was greatly moved, and he said to him, "What are you saying? Who has seduced your daughter? Tell me who he is that I may expel him from the monastery." The man replied, "It is Maryana who has seduced my daughter." The archimandrite commanded that Maryana should be sent out from the monastery. Maryana could not be found. Then they knew that he was on a journey outside for the monastery. The archimandrite said to the father of the maiden, "There is nothing further which I can do except this. When Maryana returns back, I will not allow him to enter the monastery." He gave orders to all the brethren of the monastery, saying, "When Maryana returns, he is not allowed to enter the monastery."

When Maryana came back from the road they would not allow him to enter the monastery. He wept at the door of the monastery, saying, "What is my

offence that I am not permitted to enter the monastery?" Then the doorkeeper said to him, "You are not permitted to enter because you have seduced the daughter of the believing man whom the monks visit." Maryana entreated the doorkeeper, saying, "For the Lord's sake go in and persuade the archimandrite to permit me to enter the monastery. Whatever he orders me to do because of my fall I will do." So the door keeper went in and told the archimandrite everything which Maryana had said, the archimandrite said to him, "Go and tell Maryana, saying, because you have done this thing you shall never see my face again. Get away to whatever place you please." When Maryana heard these things he was greatly afflicted, and sat by the door of the monastery night and day. Maryana wept because of what happened to him. He besought those who went in and those who came out to entreat the Archimandrite on his behalf. Although many folk did so, begging the Archmandrite to let Maryana come into the monastery, the Archimandrite would not be persuaded to do so.

After that daughter, through whom Maryana had been trodden in the dust, had given birth to her child. Her father took the born boy and brought him to Maryana, saying, "Behold, here is your son. Take him and rear him." Maryana took the child, saying, "Glory be to God who can endure and bear with sinners like myself." Daily, Maryana took the child and went up the mountain to the goats of the monastery, and fed the boy with goat's milk. When the child was suckled, Maryana returned to the door of the monastery. He never left the door of the monastery except when he went to give the child milk. He besought those who went in and those who came out, with tears, to unite with him in making supplication to God to forgive him his sin. He sat by the door of the monastery for four years, with tears never absent from his eyes, neither by night nor by day. Everyone who heard the sound of his weeping was grieved for his sake. After Maryana had suffered affliction by the door of the monastery for four years and had shown the child to every man, saying, "Pray for me, for I fell into fornication. This child is the result of my fornication." God moved the mind of the Archimandrite to bring Maryana into the monastery, for His mercy was revealed on him. He commanded the Archimandrite to bring Maryana inside.

As soon as Maryana heard that they were going to bring him into the monastery, he rose up straightaway, and fell down before the Lord, saying, "Glory is to You, O Lord, Who has not been unmindful of such a great sinner as I am! I give thanks to You for all the goodness which you have shown me. What have I to give to You in return? For You have brought me into the monastery, by the door of which I had decided in my mind that I must die." As soon as those who had been sent to bring Maryana into the monastery had

done so, Maryana fell down before the Archimandrite, and before the whole brotherhood of the monastery. He was carrying the child and was weeping, sighing, groaning, and said to them, "Forgive me, O masters and fathers, for I have angered God with my evil works, and you I have afflicted greatly. Pray for me, that God may forgive me the fall wherewith I fell."

After many years of great labors of spiritual excellence, Maryana delivered his soul to our Lord. None of the brethren had ever seen him laugh or smile. To the contrary, he mourned all the days of his life. When he died, the brethren drew near to anoint him with oil according to the custom. Then they discovered that Maryana was a woman. The brethren ran quickly and called the man who made the accusation against Maryana. When he had come and seen Maryana, a great wonder laid hold upon him, and besought God to forgive him the great sin and wrong which he had done to Maryana. All those who heard and saw this, glorified God that His saints fight so bravely for His Name's sake.

26. The History of a Certain Sage and of the Watching of the Mind

THERE WAS A CERTAIN OLD MAN who lived in his cell and performed mighty ascetic works. Whenever the brethren of the Cells gathered together for the vigil of the First Day of the week, he would come to the general assembly, and act in such a way as to make the brethren despise him. Indeed, they regarded him as a man who had gone out of his senses, although he did everything with discretion. God, the Good and Compassionate, did not wish the labors of the old man to be hidden. God revealed and made some of them known for the benefit of the community. God also sent angels, in the forms of rich and honourable men, to the priest of the Cells, to salute him. When the priest saw them, he ran forward to meet them, for he thought that they who appeared to him were great and wealthy men. He rose up immediately and saluted them. After they had sat down and conversed with the old man, they besought him, saying, "O father, we beg you to allow us to go round the Cells that we may be blessed by the Fathers." He accepted their petition, and permitted them to do whatever they wished. They asked him to send to them one of the brethren. Then the priest called one of the brethren, and commanded him to go with them, he said to him secretly, "Take heed lest you take them to the cell of that mad old man, for when they see that he has lost his senses, they will be sorry they have met him."

When they had come out to the Cells, the honourable men fell down before the priest of the Cells, and said to him, "O Father, give our brother orders to

take us to see all the fathers.” The priest said to them, “I have commanded him to take you to them all.” Having gone to the fathers of the Cells, and visited them, they returned to the priest in his cell, and he said to them, “Are you gratified now that you have seen the fathers?” They said to him, “O father, we are gratified, but we are sorry about one thing, that is to say, because you did command the brother that we should not see all the fathers.” Then the priest called the brother who had gone with them, and said in their presence, “Did not I tell you to take the brethren to all the cells?” The brother said, “Yes, father, you did tell me to do so, and I took them to all the cells, and they have seen all the brethren.” Then the honourable men said to the priest, “Forgive us, father, but there are some of the fathers whom we have not seen, and we are greatly grieved by that. Say a prayer on our behalf so that we may depart.”

After the priest had prayed over them, they departed from him. He called the brother who had gone with them, and said to him, “How did these men know what I ordered you to do? Did you, perchance, reveal it to them?” The brother made repentance, and said, “Forgive me, father, but I did not reveal your orders to them.” Then the priest knew that the matter was from God. He rose up straightaway and went to that old man whom he thought to be out of his mind. He fell down on his face before him, and laid hold upon his feet. He also besought him to reveal to him his ascetic works and labors. He swore to the old man that he would not rise up from the ground, and would not let go of his hold until he had done so, saying to the old man likewise, “That I should come to you and that you should reveal your labors to me, are matters from God.” The old man was unwilling to reveal his works, because he did not wish to be held in honour because of them. Nevertheless, he was compelled to do so as the priest had told him that the matter was from God. He promised the priest to reveal one thing to him. When the priest heard the promise of the old man, he rose up from the ground. While seeing the old man in a gentle and tranquil frame of mind, he marveled, because he had never before seen him as he was at that moment. Then the old man said to the priest, “Depart, O father, I did not know that I did even one good thing, but of such things which I have the following. I have by my side two baskets, one on my right hand, and one on my left. For every good thought which springs up in my mind I take a pebble and throw it into the basket which is on my right hand. For every hateful thought which rises in me, I also take a pebble and throw it into the basket which is on my left hand. I did this everyday. When the time for the evening meal has arrived, I take out the pebbles, and count them. If the number of those which are in the basket of good thoughts do not exceed those in the basket of evil thoughts, I do not take any supper that evening. If

they do exceed, then I eat, and rejoice. For sometimes it happened that several days passed without my eating at all, because the pebbles of the good deeds do not exceed in number the pebbles of the bad ones. Whensoever an abominable thought come to me, I pass judgement on myself, and say, "Take heed, for you will not eat today!" Having heard these things the priest praised God, the Lord of the universe. He marveled how the old man could perform such works of righteousness and yet keep them hidden from every man.

27. Of Two Brothers Who Dwelt in a Persian Monastery

A CERTAIN HISTORY, WHICH IS FULL OF PAIN AND PROFIT, O my beloved, came to me by chance, that is to say, through conversation and speech with the brethren. I have thought much about it, and have determined that it is right for me to narrate it, and to set it down in writing, so that many from the reading of the same may acquire spiritual profit, may watch against enmity, may not have bitter hatred of one another for any reason whatever, that each of us may be at peace with the other, so that each of us may forgive the other any cause for murmuring or anger, and may remember the words of our Lord, and God, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

There were two brethren who dwelt in one abode in a certain Persian monastery. It happened that one of them had a dispute with the other, and they separated from one another, one leaving the monastery altogether, and the other remaining in the abode where they lived together. It happened that he who remained behind was seized, bound, and shut up in prison, for giving testimony concerning our Lord. He was brought before the judge, and was questioned by him once, twice, and a third time. He bore severe stripes and did not deny Christ. He was again fast bound in the prison house. When his companion heard this he repented in his soul, and thought, "It is right that I should go and be reconciled with my brother, for perhaps through this testimony which he persists in giving, he may depart from the world and go away, each of us keeping wrath against the other, and through this we both shall suffer no small loss, and probably I more than he." When the brother had meditated thus, he came to the prison and enquired for his companion who was imprisoned there. He went into his presence and fell down at his feet, and besought and entreated him to be reconciled to him. The brother who was in fetters would not be persuaded to do this, and continued in his wrathful condition. When the brother saw this he left him and departed in sorrow.

On the following day, the judge commanded bringing the man who was

bound and in prison. He asked him if he would be persuaded to deny his God and to worship the sun but he would not agree to do either. The judge gave orders that he be laid out and beaten, and be smitten with rods. When they had laid him out, the strokes were being laid on by two men at a time, he denied Christ. When the judge saw this, he commanded the men to stop beating him, and called him. He asked him, saying, "What ails you? I caused you to bear severe stripes on three previous occasions, and you were neither overcome nor played the coward's part. Yet now, while they are coming near you, you do deny your God." The brother said, "I have acted thus because I have sinned and treated the commandments of the Lord my God with contempt, God who commanded us to forgive each his offences. I had once a brother in our Lord, and we lived together in one monastery, and it happened that anger rose up between us. We separated from each other in enmity. Yesterday he came to me in prison, fell down before me and begged for peace from me. I would not consent to be reconciled to him. Therefore, I was deprived from the goodness of God. God did not help me this day as He has always done before. I denied Him. During the stripes which I received formerly I used to see Him spread out about a hand's breadth above me. He did not permit me to suffer. But today He forsook me. At a small amount of pain I was terrified and I denied Him." When the judge heard these things, he commanded that his fetters be loosened off him, and be dismissed. The brother, feeling disgrace and shame at the fall which had come upon him, went out from the presence of the judge. He directed his way straight to his companion, and fell down on his face at his feet. He wept and cried out bitterly. He entreated for mercy and peace. When his companion looked at him, he suffered in great grief, and received him. They were reconciled. He prayed for him, although the experience of their separation from one another was bitter for both.

Then the brother who denied God straightaway returned to the door of the judge. He began to cry out and to curse the king, so that they might bring him again before the judge for examination. The judge did not wish to say anything to him. When the brother saw this, he departed from there, and through penitence and grief for what happened to him, and through the pain and anguish of his soul, he threw himself into a fire temple. He began to cast dust and everything else which came to his hands on the fire. He cursed the king mightily, saying, "God will receive those who have been tripped up and have fallen if they repent and turn to Him." He departed from there, and wandered about, and threw stones at every magician or pagan whom he met. He never ceased from reviling the king. He never ceased or kept silent concerning the compassion of our Lord, which is laid out for those who repent, and cried

out, saying, "Verily, there is no god except our Lord Jesus Christ. I, through my sins, and my negligence of His mercy, have denied Him." When the judge heard these things, he feared lest he would suffer a penalty and be condemned to death as that brother who reviled the king, and had been neglectful. The judge straightaway sent forth a decree concerning him, ordering that his head should be cut off quickly with the sword. When they had seized the monk, they took him outside the city. He cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Blessed are You, O our Lord Jesus Christ, for ten thousand times ten thousand sins are too few for Your mercy to forgive in one hour." Having said this, they made him kneel down, and smitten him by the sword and received mercy. Glory is to the Power Who makes His saints strong to do His Will. May we have mercy shown to us through their prayers. Amen.

28. Of a Certain Virgin Who Grew Old in the Works of the Fear of God

A CERTAIN OLD MAN RELATED THE FOLLOWING STORY: There was a virgin who was far advanced in years. She had grown old in the fear of God. Having been asked by me to tell me the reason why she left the world, she began, with sighs, to speak to me as following. She said, "Great and marvelous things have happened to me. My father was a peasant man. He was modest in his disposition. He was a delicate man in health, and was always suffering from somekind of sickness. He lived entirely to himself, and never interfered in the affairs of other people. It was the greatest difficulty to induce him to see the people of his village. When he was in good health he devoted his attention unceasingly to the care of his estate, and occupied himself at all seasons with the cultivation of his fields. He finally was obliged to pass many long days of his life laid out on a bed of sickness. He was so quiet that those who were not acquainted with him would have thought that he was deaf. My mother was the opposite of my father in all her ways and manners. She used to do things, which were beyond her capacity. She was very talkative. Her words to everyone were useless. She talked so much that everyone imagined that her body was composed wholly of tongues. Moreover, she had quarrels with her neighbours continually, and was always in a state of drunkenness. She drank shamelessly at all times with wanton folk. She managed the affairs of her house badly, in the manner of a harlot. At length, though the house was well furnished with goods of every kind, it was with the greatest difficulty that the people could find enough to supply our wants. She was very lax in the care for the things, which my father required in his illness. She displayed the utmost attention in

providing for her own body in a disgraceful manner. The people of the village at length fled before her shameless appearance. No illness ever came on her, and had never been ill in the whole course of her life, from the day she was born, she was healthy in body until her death.

When I, a wretched girl, lived for sometime in circumstances as these, it happened that, after struggling against a long illness, where my father was obliged to pass everyday of his life in the infirmity of sickness, he departed from the world. At the very moment of his death, the weather changed. The rain poured down in torrents, lightnings and thunders were tearing through the air, disturbing it violently. It was impossible to tell whether it was day or night. My father, for this reason, lay dead on his bier for three days, as the weather did not permit us to bury him. Moreover, it made the people of the village to shake their heads, and wondered, saying, "Perhaps great wickednesses were committed by this man secretly, and he may have been found to be such an enemy of God that even the earth will not permit his burial. But, in order that his body might not corrupt, even though the weather was gloomy and threatening, and the rain had not ceased, by some means or other, we carried him to the grave, and laid him there. My mother, as one who had found great relief, fulfilled unrepented her wanton lusts to the utmost. She straightaway turned my father's house into an abode of harlots. She lived there in such a state of luxury and lascivious pleasure that soon all the goods in it only a mere remnant was left when I was very young. Then with difficulty death came to my mother. In my opinion, death was afraid to approach her, for great worms grew in her. With much trouble she was buried; the weather by its serenity and the sun by its splendour helping in the work.

After the death of my mother, I was still a little girl. I left the world. During the period when I was a young woman the lusts of the body were stirred up within me, and goaded me severely. I used to rise up in the evening (or night) that I might lie down again and find a little relief from the disturbance of my mind. A struggle went on in my thoughts, for I wondered what manner of life I should choose for myself, how I should end the days of my life, and whether they would be passed in quietness and happiness, and fair chastity, as during my father's lifetime. Then my thoughts spoke to me thus, "Behold, in this world your father did not enjoy any happiness whatsoever. He passed all his life in sickness and wretchedness. He departed from this world of trouble under the same circumstances. The earth, even, was unwilling to receive his body. What do men do to receive such a life as this from? God, why did my father deserve such treatment? On the other hand, supposing I chose to lead a life like that of my mother, will that be any better to deliver my body over to fornication, and

lasciviousness. What is the gratification of my lusts? For, behold, my mother left no kind of abominable wickedness she did not commit. She destroyed her whole life with her depravity. Yet she departed from this world having enjoyed health and prosperity every day of her life! What then? Is not it then right for me to live even as she lived? For it is better that I should believe with my own eyes, and that they should see for themselves the various endings of such matters. There is nothing better than to understand thoroughly what we see openly before our eyes." I, the wretched girl, vainly imagined that such thoughts were the thoughts of truth. For this reason, I determined to prepare myself to live even as my mother lived. When the night had overtaken me, I slept thinking thoughts of this kind. During my sleep I dreamt, a certain man, of huge stature, stood up above me. His appearance was frightful, and his form trembled and terrified me. His face was hard. In a stern voice he asked me, saying, "Tell me, what are these thoughts in your heart?" Because I was terrified by his appearance and form, I scarcely dared to look at him. In a voice sterner than before, he commanded me to reveal to him the things, which I settled in my own mind to do. Being stupefied with fear, I forgot all my thoughts and I said to him, "My lord, I do not know what you are saying." Denying that I knew, he reminded me of everything which was in my mind, one after the other. Therefore, having rebuked myself, I turned, begged and entreated him that I might be held worthy of forgiveness. I related to him the reason for such thoughts. He straightaway said to me, "I am about to show you both your father and your mother. You will see the different manner of life which they lead, the things each does, and you shall choose which life to lead." He took me by my hands, drew me away, and carried me to an exceedingly great plain. There were many paradises, and thick trees heavily laden with fruits. The appearance and beauty surpassed description. When I had entered into that plain, my father met me, embraced and kissed me. He conversed with me and called me 'my daughter.' While I was in his embrace, I besought him to remain with him. He said to me, "At present it is impossible. If you desire to walk chastely in my footsteps you shall come here after no great time."

As I remained making my supplication to him, he who had brought me to this place took me. I was lifted up in his hands, and he said to me, "Come and see your mother also in the fire which is blazing fiercely, so that you may know how to choose what is good, and what manner of life is useful and beneficial for you to incline to." he showed me a fiery furnace which was burning fiercely. Every kind of cruel wrath surrounded the furnace. I heard the sound of weeping and gnashing of teeth coming from there. Having looked down into the furnace, I saw my mother sunk in fire up to her neck. She was weeping and

gnashing her teeth. She was being consumed in the fire, and was being gnawed by a multitude of worms. When she saw me, she cried out with tears in a loud voice, saying, "My daughter, Woe is to me. O my daughter, for these things had happened to me because of my evil deeds. I ridiculed the things, which were said to me concerning chastity and concerning the punishments declared to fall upon those who committed fornication and adultery. Behold, in return for my lascivious pleasure, I have to suffer torture because I did not think that vengeance was laid up therefore. Behold, in return for a little pleasure, the momentary gratification of my desire, is an everlasting punishment I have to endure. What penalty I am not compelled to pay? Consider, moreover, that in return for the shortlived happiness, I the wretched woman, enjoyed, I have to pay a prolonged penalty. Because I despised God what evil wages I have to receive! All these things have overtaken me because I behaved rebelliously, but, behold, this is the time for helping me, O my daughter. Remember with what anxious care and attention, your bringing up was carried out, the helpful things which I brought you, all the good things which I did for you. Have mercy upon the woman who burns in the fire. Have mercy upon the woman who is cast into tortures as these. Have pity upon me, O my daughter, stretch out your hand, and lift me up out of this place." I excused myself from doing this on account of him that stood by my side. She wept and cried out to me, saying, "O my daughter, help me. O my daughter, have pity upon me, and come to me. Do not neglect your mother who gnashes her teeth in pain. Do not treat her with indifference, for she suffers torment in Gehenna."

As, according to the human nature, I felt pain because of her tears and mournful voice, I began to cry out loudly, to sigh and moan bitterly. Then all those who were sleeping in our house awoke. When they had risen up, I told them the reason of the out cry and disturbance. I narrated to them everything, which appeared to me. These are the things, by the rich mercy of God, I chose to follow the life and works of my father. I was persuaded to be governed, and through Divine Providence I am confirmed in my belief that such punishments are laid up for those who desire to live an evil life.

These are the things, which we heard from the virgin who is worthy of blessing. From them we may know what delights, according to the things which appeared to her in the revelation, are laid up for those who wish to live in a state of spiritual excellence, and what punishments are prepared for those who choose to live a wicked and wanton life. Because of these things it is necessary that we should strive to the utmost to live a life of virtue, and to excel, so that, by the help of God, we may through our life and deeds merit the happiness of heaven. Amen.

29. Of Stephana, a Man who Fell into Filthy Shamelessness

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN IN SCETE whose name was Stephena, who dwelt in the desert for twenty-nine years. His apparel was made of palm leaves. He lived in a strict state of self-denial, and persisted to such a degree in ascetic abstinence that he never had the least inclination for meat, which are usually desired and pleasant to the taste. He greatly condemned those who, because of sickness, either ate cooked food or drank milk. The gift of healing had been given to him to such a degree that he could cast out devils by a word. It happened that on one occasion a man with an unclean spirit came to Scete, and wished to be healed. When the monk saw that the man was vexed sorely by the devil, the monk made a prayer and healed him. At length, this monk was rejected by Divine Providence because of his immeasurable arrogance and haughtiness. He imagined himself to be more excellent in his life and works than the other fathers. First of all he separated himself from the brotherhood, and went to become an archimandrite in one of the Alexandrian monasteries. He said in his pride, "Am I to be in subjection to Macarius? Are not my life and works better than his?" This man arrived at such a state of madness that he went to Alexandria, and gave himself up to gluttony, drunkenness, eating of more flesh than rational beings need to eat. Finally he fell and settled down into the pit of the lust for women. He had always been going about in the houses of harlots, and in the ill-famed taverns. He hung closely to the whores, and gratified his lusts in a filthy manner without shame. He became a laughing-stock to all who knew him. But the spirit went forth to those who knew him, saying, The law was not made for the perfect, and he himself said, I do not act thus because of passion and fornication, neither do I do anything which is abominable, for it is not a sin to go with women, for male and female were created by God.

It fell out that one day, the blessed man Evagrius went to Alexandria on some business, which called us thither. We had with us four brethren. As we were passing through the city market, that monk met us accidentally, and he was talking with a harlot about his filthy lust. When the blessed Evagrius saw him, he wept, and fell down at his feet and made obeisance to him. The man did not incline his head in the smallest degree. With infinite arrogance and haughtiness he made answer to him, saying, "What do hypocrites and deceivers seek here?" Then the blessed Evagrius entreated him to go with us to the place where we were lodging. He did not by any means wish to go. When, with the greatest difficulty, he had been persuaded to go with us, so soon as we had entered in and prayed, the blessed Evagrius fell upon his neck, kissed him,

and with tears said to him, "Verily, O my beloved, from all that divine service of angels you have been brought down to this depth of wickedness. You have turned yourself from converse with God to converse with harlots. Instead of the life and service of angels you have chosen the life of devils! But I beseech and entreat you, do not to cut off the hope of your redemption, Arise, and come with us to the desert, for by my hands God the Merciful is able to restore you to your former grade." His understanding had been so blinded by Satan that he did not know how to listen to what was said to him, nor did he know what he answered. He said to Evagrius, "Up to the present I have certainly been wandering about. But now I have found the path of truth." He began to make a mock of the fathers, saying, "You certainly wander about and dwell in the desert under a false character, for the sake of men, and not for the sake of God. You are to the spectators as idols whom men decorate, and to whom they pay worship." Thus, being full of the pride and boasting of Satan, he spurned the fathers, went forth and departed. The blessed Evagrius and the brethren wept and groaned over him greatly.

Then that man carried off a certain virgin, who was an orphan and a nun living by herself, with a foul design to his monastery. Though he did this with the excuse that he was going to help her by means of alms of which she was in need, it was in reality that he might fulfil his wanton desire. Having lived with her in this degraded state for about two years, thieves, at length, came to him by night. They first tied him with cords, and then struck him with hard and cruel blows until he brought everything he had in his dwelling and laid it before them. Last of all, they shut him up with the woman with whom he used to work out his wantonness, in a house full of straw. Both of them were being bound with cords. The thieves set fire to the house, and the two were consumed and died a bitter death.

In them was fulfilled what was spoken by the teacher of the Gentiles, who said, "Because they did not decide within themselves to know God, God delivered them over to the knowledge of vanity, that they might disgrace their bodies therewith, and they received the reward which befitted their error in their own persons." That is to say, the burning of the fire which is here is a pledge of that fire which tormenteth all the wicked. Now the things, which happened to Stephena took place because he separated himself from the brotherhood, was unduly exalted in his mind, and because he imagined that he was perfect.

30. *Of Eucarpus*

THERE WAS ALSO IN THE DESERT A CERTAIN MAN named Eucarpus. He passed eighteen years shut up in his cell. Necessary food was brought by others. He had lived in seclusion for fifteen years, and never spoke to any man during that period except when he was in need of something. He used to write on paper what he wished to say, and would give it to those who ministered to him. He has done thus when any man asked him a question or spoke to him. His food consisted of vegetables soaked in water, and pounded garden herbs. He carried out his rule of life with infinite labor. Finally, however, the devils made him a laughing stock also, because of the vain opinion, which he had concerning himself. First of all he separated himself from mingling with the brethren and conversing with them. Next he ceased to meditate on the Holy Scriptures, and he did nothing except pray continually; for he was proud and haughty in his mind. He thought that he was perfect, and on account of his purity, he was always seeing God in his mind, for he that tempts him also, even as he had tempted the blessed man Job. One night Satan appeared to him in the form of an angel of light, saying to him, "I am Christ."

When Eucarpus saw him, he thought that the appearance was a real person. He fell down, and worshipped him, saying, "Master, what do you command your servant to do?" He who had appeared to him said to him, "Since you have excelled much in your works, and have kept all my commandments, I desire greatly to make my abode with you. Since you are perfect, it is not necessary for you to shut yourself up. It is no longer right that you should live in seclusion. You must teach all the brethren not to destroy their souls with the reading of the Scriptures, and the reciting of the Psalms. They must not labor in the toil of the body, and must not vex their souls with fasting, hunger, and thirst. They must labor with the labor of the soul, for by these means they shall be able speedily to be lifted up to the highest grade. They must always look at me with their minds, and I will show them my glory. As for you, since you have raised yourself above all the monks by thy works, behold, I make you this day a chief and a governor over all the monks who dwell in Scete. Macarius is not as much useful as a governor as you are." Then Eucarpus was more lifted up in his mind than before. He was more proud, and believed truly the error of the Crafty One. His understanding was taken away from him, and he was smitten in his mind immediately he had worshipped the Calumniator.

On another day there was a congregation in the church. Satan appeared to Eucarpus a second time, and said to him, "Go this day, for all the brethren are gathered together, and teach them everything which I commanded you

yesterday in the night season.” Eucarpus opened the door of the house where he secluded himself, and departed to go to the church. It happened that Abba John was sitting by the side of the church. The brethren were round about him, and were asking him about their thoughts. When Eucarpus came, and saw John with the brethren surrounding him, he was filled with envy of him. He answered and said to John with haughtiness and wicked wrath, “Why do you adorn yourself and do sit down, like a whore, who wishes to multiply her friends? Or, who commanded you to be a corrector of others, seeing that it is I who am the governor of the monastery?” When the brethren heard these words, they were greatly moved, and said to him, “Who made you the governor of Scete?” Eucarpus said to them, “Yesterday in the night I was made governor by Christ. Therefore turn to me, and I will teach you the way with which you shall easily ascend to the high grade of the vision of glory. Do not go astray after the writings of Evagrius, neither hearken to the words of John, for you have wandered far enough into error already.”

Then he began to revile the fathers, and called Macarius a painted idol whom those who err worship, for he does not know how to lead the brethren on the path towards heavenly things. He called Evagrius a hewer of words who has led the brethren into error by following his writings, and has made them to cease from spiritual service. The devils made a mock of Eucarpus until they were able to lift him up and to dash him down on the earth. All these things fell upon him took place because he condemned the brethren, and, through his pride and arrogance, he held them in contempt, and because he did not desire to meditate upon the Holy Scriptures, and on the doctrine of the fathers. Finally, when the fathers saw that he was smitten in mind, they threw iron fetters on him and bound him with. He lived with them on him. The holy fathers offered prayers on his behalf for eleven whole months. Then his mind returned to him, and he was so thoroughly cured of his pride that he perceived his weakness, and recognized his disease whereby he had been made a mock of by the devils. In him was fulfilled what was said, “Old blains (or wounds) are cured by burnings, and, You who did exalt yourself to heaven shall be brought down even to Sheol.” Eucarpus lived after being cured of his arrogance one year and one month. The fathers commanded that he should minister to the sick, and wash the feet of strangers, till his death.

31. Of a certain Famous Deacon who dwelt in a Coenobium in Egypt

A CERTAIN BROTHER ASKED AN OLD MAN and said to him, "If it should happen that a man fell into temptation, by the permission of God, for the benefit of his soul, what is right for those to do who are made to stumble by the same temptation?" The old man answered, saying, "If he repents in very truth, with all his heart, and make confession to God in his repentance, saying, I have been rightly humbled, and shall say to God, It is good for me that I have been humbled, so that I might learn Your commandments, God is able to heal the consciences of those who have already offended Him." The old man spake and narrated the following story.

There was a certain deacon in a coenobium in Egypt, and a rich man, who had been driven out from the presence of a governor who had dominion over him, came with his household to that coenobium. The deacon stumbled and fell into adultery with the wife of one of those who were with him. He became a laughing stock to every man. He went to a certain man who was his friend, and revealed to him the matter, saying to him, "Let no man know where I am; for he hid himself in a secret part of the cell of him that loved him, and he said to him, 'Here bury me during my lifetime.' Having gone down into the darkness of that hidden place he repented to God in very truth. After a certain time, the river, which was near to the place in the region where the deacon had hidden himself, did not rise according to its measure. The people of the country prayed and made supplication it was revealed to one of the saints that, unless that deacon who is hidden among us come out, the waters will not rise. So they went and brought him out from the place where he was hidden. When he had come, he made a prayer, and straightaway the river rose. Those who had been formerly offended by him were now edified the more. They profited through him greatly and glorified God.

32. Of a Certain Excellent Bishop who Fell into Fornication

THERE WAS A CERTAIN BISHOP IN ONE OF THE CITIES, who through the working of the Calumniator fell into fornication. One day when the congregation was in the church, although no one knew of the Bishop's sin, he voluntarily confessed it before all the assembly, saying, "I have fallen into fornication." Then he took off his vestments, and laid them upon the altar, saying, "I cannot, hence forward, be your Bishop." All the people cried out with tears, saying, "Let this sin be upon us; only remain in your episcopate."

He answered and said to them, "If you wish me to remain in my episcopate, do what I shall say to you." He commanded, while all the doors of the church were shut with the exception of one, and threw himself down upon his face, saying, "The man who goes out from the church without walking upon me shall have no portion with God." They did according to his word. When the last man had gone out, a voice was heard, saying, "Because of his great humility I have forgiven him his sin."

33. Of a Certain Brother who was a Neighbour of Father Poemen

WHEN ABBA POEMEN CAME TO EGYPT to dwell there, he took up his abode by the side of a brother who had a wife. Though the old man knew this, he did not rebuke him. When the time had come for the woman to bring forth, he cried out to a younger brother, and said to him, "Arise, take this jar of wine and carry it to our neighbour, for he will have need of this day." The matter was not known to that brother, but he did as commanded by. The brother who had a wife groaned and repented in his mind. After few days he dismissed the woman, and gave her whatever he has with him. He came to Abba Poemen, and said to him, "Behold from this day onwards I repent, O father. I entreat you to pray to God on my behalf so that He may receive my repentance." Abba Poemen said to him, "If you repent with all thy heart, I believe that God will bestow forgiveness to you. Do not despair of you redemption." The brother went and built for himself a place of retreat. He made an entrance through which he used to come to visit the old man. He would go to Abba Poemen where the old man would reveal to him the way of God, and thus he profited spiritually. The brother labored in fasting, and in prayer. He wept, sighed, and grieved sorely for his sin. At length it was revealed to the old man on behalf of the brother that God had accepted his repentance.

34. Of a Certain Brother Who Denied Christ

ONCE, A CERTAIN BROTHER WAS ENGAGED in a war against fornication. He happened to pass through a village in Egypt where he saw the daughter of a heathen priest. He loved her, and said to her father, "Give her to me to wife." The priest answered him saying, "I cannot give her to you before learning from the god his will in the matter." He went to his devil, and said to him, "Behold, a certain monk wishes to take my daughter to wife. Shall I

give her to him or not?" The devil answered, saying, "Ask him if he will deny his God, and his baptism, and the vows he made before entering the monastic life." Having gone to the brother the priest told him that he would accept him as his daughter's husband if he would deny both these things. The priest also said to him, "Will you deny the baptism wherewith you were baptized?" The brother answered and said, "Yes, I will." Straightaway, he saw the Spirit of God go forth from his mouth in the form of a dove, and ascend in to heaven. Then the priest went to the devil and told him what the brother had said. Behold, he has promised to deny all three things. The devil answered him saying, "You shall not give him your daughter, for his God has not departed from him. God is still helping him, and will accept him if he repents." The priest returned to that brother, saying, "I cannot give her to you, for Your God is with you. He will not leave you, but will help you." When the brother heard this, he said within himself, "So God keeps such great grace for you, and will still help you!"

Then the brother came back to his senses. He made strong his mind, fortified his will, and went out to a certain old man in the desert. He related the matter to him. The old man answered and said to him, "Sit down here with me in this cave, and fast for three weeks, only eating once every two days, and I will make supplication on your behalf to God." The old man labored with the brother, and made entreaty and supplication to God, saying, "I beseech You, O Lord God, to grant me the soul of this brother, and to accept his repentance." When the first week was completed, the old man came to the brother, and asked him, saying, "Have you seen anything?" The brother answered and said, "Yes, I have seen a dove flying about in the heights of heaven, and standing before my head." The old man said to him, "Take heed to yourself. Pray to God with groans and sighs." The following week he came again to the brother, and asked him the same question, saying, "Have you seen anything?" The brother made answered, saying, "I saw a dove, which came and drew near my head." The old man admonished him, saying, "Arise and pray to God with abundant supplication." When the third week passed, the old man came to the brother and said to him, "What have you seen?" He answered and said to him, "I saw a dove which came and stood upon my head. I stretched out my hand and took hold of it. But it fled away and entered into my mouth." Then the old man gave thanks to God, and said to the brother, "God has accepted your repentance. Watch yourself and take heed to yourself." The brother answered and said, "Behold, from this day onwards I shall live with you, O father, even to the day of my death."

35. Of a Certain Old Man in Scete

THERE WAS A CERTAIN OLD MAN IN SCETE who, who became very sick indeed. He was ministered to by the brethren, and thought in his mind that they were tired of him. He said, "I will go to Egypt, so that the brethren may not have to labor on my account." Abba Moses said to him, "You shall not go, for if you go, you will fall into fornication." The old man was grieved and said, "My body has long been dead, and you say these things to me?" He went up to Egypt, and men heard about him. They brought many offerings to him. A certain believing virgin came in faith to minister to him. After sometime, when the old man had been healed, the young woman laid with him, and conceived. The folk asked her, saying, "Where had you conceived?" She said to them, "From the old man." They did not believe her. When the old man heard that they would not believe her, he said, "Yes, I have done this thing; but protect for me the child, which shall be born." When the child was born and weaned, there was a congregation in Scete. The old man went down carrying the child on his shoulder, and went into the church before all the people. When they saw him they all wept. The old man said to the brethren, "Observe, O my brethren. This is the child of disobedience. Take heed, then, to yourselves, for I have committed this act in my old age. Pray for me." The old man went to his cell, and dismissed the things where with he has lived. He returned to his former deeds. After a time he arrived once more at his old measure of ascetic excellence.

36. Of the Harlot Whom Serapion Converted

ABBA SERAPION CAME AND PASSED through a certain village in Egypt where he saw a harlot standing in his cell. The old man said to her, "Remain here until the evening, for I wish to come with you, and to pass this night with you." The harlot said, "It is well, O father." She prepared her bed, and awaited the old man with that which he required. When it was evening, Abba Serapion came, but he brought nothing with him. He went to her cell, and said to her, "Is your bed ready?" She said to him, "Yes, father." They shut themselves in. The old man answered her, saying, "Wait a little, because I must perform a certain thing which is a law to us." He began to recite the Book of the Psalms of David from the beginning. With every Psalm he offered up a prayer on her behalf, and made supplication before God that she might repent and live. God hearkened to him. And the harlot stood up in fear by the side of the old

man and prayed too. When Abba Serapion finished all the Psalms she fell down upon the ground. He began to repeat many verses from the books of the Apostles. When he had finished his service, God opened the heart of that woman, and knew that Abba Serapion had not come to her for the purposes of sin, but to redeem her. She fell on her face before him, and said, "Perform an act of grace for me, O father, and take me to anyplace wherever I can please God." He took her to an abode of nuns and placed her there. He said to the abbess of the convent, "Take this sister, O mother, and do not lay on her the rules that bind the other sisters. Whatever she requires, give her; and in proportion as she finds rest. Let her submit to be led." When the woman dwelt in the nunnery for a few days, she said, "I am a sinful woman, and wish to eat only in the evening." After a few more days, she said, "Many sins lie to my charge, and I therefore beg that I may eat once every four days." She did so. After few days more she besought the mistress of the nunnery, saying, "Do an act of grace for me. Since I have made God exceedingly angry, take me into a cell and wall it up. Through a small opening therein give me a little bread and work for my hands to do." The abbess of the nunnery hearkened to her, and did thus, and in this wise that woman pleased God all the days of her life.

37. Of the Harlot Whom a Subdeacon Drove out of Church

A CERTAIN OLD MAN SAID, there was a harlot who was so beautiful and so rich that all princes flocked to her. One day she went into the church and desired to pass inside the gates, but a subdeacon who was standing at the door would not allow her to do so. He said, "You are not allowed to enter into the house of God, because you are an unclean woman." While they were striving together, the Bishop heard the sound of the noise. The Bishop went out to see what was the matter. The harlot said to him, "The subdeacon would not permit me to go into the church." The Bishop said to her, "You are permitted to do so because you are unclean." Having repented within herself, she said, "I will never play the whore again." The Bishop said to her, "If you will strip yourself of all your possessions, I shall know of a certainty that you do repent." She brought her possessions. The Bishop took the possessions and divided them in the fear of God among the needy. The woman went to the church, and wept saying, "If it has happened to me thus in this world, what would have happened to me in the next?" She repented, and became a chosen vessel.

38. Of Abba Apollo who was in Scete

THEY SAY CONCERNING ABBA APOLLO, who lived in Scete, that he was originally a rude and brutish herdsman, and that he once saw in the fields a woman who was with child. Through the operation of the devil, he said, "I wish to know the condition of the child which is in the womb of this woman, and that he ripped her open and saw the child in her belly." Straightaway he repented, and he purged his heart. Having repented he went to Scete, and revealed to the fathers what he had done. He heard them singing the Psalms, and saying, "The days of our years are three score years and ten, and with difficulty we come to fourscore years." He said to the old men, "I am forty years old this day, and have never yet made a prayer. If I live for forty years more, I will never rest, nor cease, nor refrain from praying to God continually that He may forgive me my sins." From that time onwards he did even as he had said, for he never toiled with the work of his hands, but he was always supplicating God, and saying, "I, O my Lord, like a man have sinned, and You, like God, forgive me." He prayed this prayer both by night and by day instead of reciting Psalms. A certain brother who used to dwell with him once heard him say in his prayer. As he spoke he wept, groaned from the bottom of his heart, and sighed in grief of heart, saying, "O my Lord, I have vexed You, have pity on me. Forgive me so that I may enjoy a little rest." Then a voice came to him, saying, "Your sins have been forgiven, so is the murder of the woman. But the murder of the child is not yet forgiven." One of the old men said, "The murder of the child also was forgiven to him, but God left him to work because this would prove beneficial to his soul."

39. Of Cosmas Who was in Mount Sinai

A CERTAIN BROTHER ASKED AN OLD MAN, saying to him, "How is it that Satan brings temptations on holy men?" The old man said, I have heard that there was a holy man whose name was Cosmas, who used to dwell in Mount Sinai. Behold, a certain man went to the tabernacle (or tent) of a husbandman. Finding his daughter by herself, he lay with her, and then said to her, "When your father comes, say to him, Abba Cosmas, the monk, has lain with me." When her father came, she told him thus. Then he took his sword, and came against the old man. When he had knocked at the door, the old man had gone out, he lifted up his sword to slay him. His hand withered straightaway. He went to the church and told the people there what the old

man had done. The fathers sent after him and brought him there. Having upbraided him, and beaten him with many stripes they wished to drive him out of the monastery. He entreated them, saying, "Allow me to stay here that I may repent, for God's sake." They separated him from the brotherhood for three years, and they laid down the command that no man was to go to him. He spent three years in coming to the church every Sunday for repentance. He besought the fathers always to pray for him, and at length the devil entered into him that had committed the act of which the old man had been accused. Being urged by him, he said, "I committed the act." Then all the people were gathered together, went to the old man and expressed their penitence, and said to him, "Forgive us, O father." He replied, "I have indeed forgiven you, but it is impossible for me to remain with you, because I have not found in any one of you the sufficient discretion to make him to sympathize with me." He departed from them. Behold, how temptations come upon holy men!

40. Of Abba Macarius

ABBA MACARIUS USED TO TELL A STORY ABOUT HIMSELF, and to say that when he was a boy he dwelt in a certain cell in Egypt, and that the people came and made him the priest in the village. He did not wish to receive the office of priest so he fled to another place, and took up his abode in a cell not very far from the habitations of man. A certain young man who feared God used to come, take away the work of the hands of the blessed man, and to minister to him. It came to pass that, as a result of a temptation, a certain virgin in the village fell into iniquity, and conceived a child. The folk said to her, "By whom is this child?" She said, "By that monk who lives in the desert." They went out, and brought him to their village, and struck him sorely. They hung round his neck black pots and handles of empty pans. They made him to go round about through the markets of their village. They mocked at him and buffeted him, saying, "This is the monk who has seduced our daughter! Let him be hanged! Let him be hanged!" They beat him nearly to death.

Then came one of the old men of the village and said to them, "How long will you go on beating this monk who is a stranger?" The man who ministered to him came after him. He was ashamed and pained because of his disgrace. The people fastened their gaze on him, saying, "Behold, the monk concerning whom you did bear witness and say that he was a holy man. Consider what he has done," said the parents of the young woman, "and unless he gives us a surety who will provide for her food we will not release him." He said to

the man who ministered to him, "Give a pledge on my behalf, saying, I will provide for that child." He gave a pledge for him, and then the monk went to his cell and gave him all the palm leaf mats of it, and said to him, "Sell these and give the money to my wife that she may eat." For Macarius said in his mind, "Behold, you have found for yourself a wife. It is necessary for you to work little or much that you may feed her." He worked by night and by day, and sent the proceeds of his toil to her.

It happened that when the time for the woman to deliver her child, she suffered very severely for many days; and although she was in great tribulation she did not give birth to the child. When her parents saw this, they said to her, "What is this which has happened to you?" Then the woman, by reason of her pains and sufferings, said, "This has happened because I told a lie and falsely accused a monk who never touched me. It was such and such a youth who had done this thing to me." When the man who ministered to Macarius learned this, he came to him with gladness, rejoiced and said to him, "The virgin was not able to bring forth until she confessed and said, The monk had never touched me. What I have said about him is a falsehood. Behold, all the village is preparing to come to you with repentance so that you may forgive them." Macarius, in order that they might not trouble him, rose up straightaway, and fled, and departed to the place in which he had his abode at that time. This is the reason why he came to Scete; and he said, "I hate the love of praise of young men who toil, and who have no reward, because they expect the adulation of the children of men." Then another well known old man said to him, "It is not greatly acceptable to me, but it is better that they should work for praise rather than they should despise it, for it always constraineth those who love praise to lead lives of abstinence, and to keep vigil, and to live in nakedness for the sake of vainglory, and to bear afflictions for the sake of praise." Then after these things the Grace of God came to them and spake, saying, "Wherefore do you not toil for My sake? Why do you toil for the sake of children of men?" They were convinced that they must not expect the praise of men but that of God. When the brethren heard this they said, "Verily the matter is indeed thus."

41. An Old Man Who Thought Melchisedek was the Son of God

ABBA DANIEL TOLD A STORY OF ANOTHER OLD MAN who used to live in the lower towns of Egypt. He said in his simplicity that Melchisedek was the Son of God. When this became known to the blessed man Theophilus, the Archbishop of Alexandria, he sent a message that the monks should bring

the old man to him. When he saw him, he perceived that he was a seer of visions, and that every thing, which he had asked God for, He gave him. He perceived that he spoke these words in his simplicity. The Archbishop dealt with him wisely in the following manner, saying, "Father, entreat your God for me, because my thoughts tell me that Melchisedek was the Son of God." He said to him likewise, "It cannot be thus, for the high priest of God was a man. And, because I had doubts in my mind concerning this, I sent for you that you might make supplication to God that He may reveal to you the matter." Then, because the old man had confidence in his labors, he spoke to him boldly, saying, "Wait three days, and I will enquire of God. Then I shall be able to inform you who Melchisedek was." So the old man departed, and came again after three days, and said to the blessed Archbishop Theophilus that Melchisedek was a man. The Archbishop said to him, "How do you know, father?" The old man said, "God showed me all the Patriarchs, one by one. They passed before me one after the other, from Adam to Melchisedek. Also, an angel said to me, 'This is Melchisedek.' Know then that of a truth the matter is as it has appeared to me." The old man departed, and he himself proclaimed that Melchisedek was a man, the blessed Theophilus rejoiced greatly.

42. Of Abba Macarius the Egyptian, the Disciple of Saint Anthony

ABBA MACARIUS USED TO DWELL BY HIMSELF IN THE DESERT. South to him, there was another desert where many dwelt. The old man was watching the road one day, and saw Satan travelling on it in the form of a man. He came along with the intention of passing him. He was arrayed in a garment full of holes, and various fruits were hanging about him. The old man Macarius said to him, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am going to visit the brethren, to make them mindful of their work." The old man said to him, "What is purpose of the various fruits on you?" Satan answered saying, "I am carrying them to the brethren for food." The old man said, "All these?" Satan said, "Yes. For if one does not please a brother, I hand him another. If that does not please also, I give him another. One or other of these must certainly please him." Having said these things, Satan went on his way.

Then the old man continued to watch the road until Satan returned. When he saw him, he said to him, "Have you been successful?" Satan said, "Where am I to obtain help?" The old man said, "For what purpose?" Satan said, "They all forsaken me, and rebelled against me. Not one of them will allow himself to be over persuaded by me." The old man said, "Have not you then one friend

left there?" Satan said to him, "Yes, I have one brother, but one only who will be persuaded by me, although whensoever he sees me he turns away his face as from that of an adversary." The old man said to him, "What is the name of this brother?" Satan said, "Theopemptus." Having said these things he departed and went on his way.

Abba Macarius rose up and went down to the lower desert. The brethren heard of his coming, brought palm leaves, and went out to meet him. Every monk prepared and made his abode ready, thinking he would come and dwell there. The old man only asked for the brother whose name was Theopemptus, and he received him joyfully. When the brethren began to speak among themselves, the old man said to him, "What have you to say, O my brother, and how are your own affairs?" Theopemptus said to him, "At the present moment, matters are well with me." He was ashamed to speak. The old man said to him, "Behold, I have now lived a life of stern asceticism for many years, and I am held in honour by every man. Nevertheless, even though I am an old man, the spirit of fornication disturbs me." Theopemptus answered, saying, "Believe me, father, it disturbs me also." The old man, like one who was vexed by many thoughts, made a reason for talking. At length he led the brother to confess the matter. Afterwards he said to him, "How long do you fast?" The brother said to Abba Macarius, "Until the ninth hour." The old men replied, "Fast until the evening, continue to do so, and you shall repeat passages from the Book of the Gospels, and from the other Scriptures. If a thought rises in your mind, do not let your mind look downwards, but always upwards. The Lord shall help you." Thus having made the brother reveal his thoughts, and having given him encouragement, he departed to go to his own desert. He traveled along the road and watched according to his custom.

He saw the devil again, and said to him, "Where are you going?" He answered, saying, "I go to remind the brethren of their work." Having departed and come back again, the holy man said to him, "How are the brethren?" The devil said, "They are in evil case." The old man said, "Why?" The devil said, "Because they are all like savage animals, and they are rebellious. But the worst thing of all is that even the one brother who used to be obedient to me has turned, for a reason I do not know, and he will not in any way be persuaded by me. He is the most savage of them all against me. I have on this account taken an oath that I will never go again to that place, at least, only after a very long time."

Abba Macarius was marvelous in his life and deeds. Once as he was travelling along in the inner desert, he looked, and, behold, there was an old man coming towards him. He was arrayed in very old apparel. Over his whole

body there were hung very many things which were like to pots, each one being provided with rings. He was covering them over as it were with a covering. He drove his staff into the ground. Though he was as timid and as terrified as a fugitive slave, he pretended to be bold, and stood up like a brave man. He spoke to the blessed Macarius, face to face, saying, "What are you doing in this wilderness, and why are you wandering here and there?" The blessed Macarius answered him, saying, "I wish to find God, for I am fleeing from sin. But who are you, O old man? Tell me, for I observe that your raiment is very different from that of the children of men. Tell me, what are these things which you have on you?" The old man, though unwilling, confessed and said, "I am he whom you call by the name of Calumniator. These things which you see on me are these things what I draw towards myself the children of men. With each one of these, according as it befits and is suitable for a man, I take care to fulfil the work of sin. By means of their lusts, as with wings, I make to turn backwards those who are obedient to me. I have great happiness in those who, through my crafts and wiles, stumble and fall."

When the blessed Macarius heard these things, he plucked up courage, and said to Satan, "By Christ, Who caused you to make a mockery of the holy angels, explain to me, one by one, each and all of the things which you earn. For by this you shall be revealed, and a man may see the insidiousness of your crafts and wiles. A man may learn your hidden snares, may recognize the multitude of the burning arrows of your error, and may flee from the performance of your will." The Calumniator answered and said, "I must reveal to you my craftiness, even though I am unwilling so to do. It is impossible for me to hide from you any of the things which you see. Learn the use (or reason) of each pot. If I find a man who meditates continually on the Law of God, I pour out on him from the pot, which is on my head dizziness and headache, and restrain him from this work. On the man who has chosen to watch by means of the recital of prayers and psalms I pour out from the pot which is on my eyelids a disposition to sleep, and I drive him along by main force into slumber. These, which you see that I have on my ears, are prepared for disobedience, the transgression of the Commandments. By their means I trap those who wish to lead a good life to disobey the word of truth. From those, which hang from my nose I sprinkle on the young the sweet smell of happiness, and lead them into fornication. From those which are on my mouth I throw out flowers and I incite the ascetic by means of blandishments, and I make to sin those who live a life of abstinence and self denial by means of such dainty meats and foods according to my desire. By means of those, which are on my mouth I draw many into the utterance of calumnies, and

filthy talk. To speak briefly, in each one of these pots is the seed, which is most useful for increasing the fruits which are worthy of me, and which may be gathered from the labors of the husbandmen who labor in my vineyard. From the pots, which are hung about my neck I pour out pride, and enclose with my nets those who are haughty in their minds. By means of all these I possess in the world multitudes of subjects who love the things, which are mine, that is to say, worldly praise and wealth, which are things remote from God, are believed to be good things in the world. The pots which you see hanging from my breasts are full of my imaginings, and with some of these I water the hearts of the children of men, and by means of the drunkenness of the passions I dissipate and destroy the mind which feareth God; and through my error I confound the memory of those men who wish to meditate upon and to think about the things which concern the world to come. Those which hang upon my body are full of want of feeling and perception, and by them, I prepare those who are without understanding to live in a savage and animal manner a life which is characterized by various kinds of brutish habits. In the pots, which are below my body are all things which are useful and suitable for union with women in fornication, and for filthy wantonness. Those which are on my hands, are useful in the committal of murders, by theme and by hands, carry out and perform the work of those who are subject to me voluntarily. The pots which you see hanging from my neck and back have in them the thick darkness of my temptations, where with I am able to vanquish those who are so bold as to contend against me; and I lay ambushes behind me, and I rush out to overthrow those who depend upon their own strength. The pots which you see hanging on my loins and thighs, and downwards to my feet, are full of the snares and nets which I pour out, to make crooked and confound the ways of those who wish to journey in the narrow path of the fear of God. By these pots, I impede the goings of those who cultivate ascetic excellence, and make them to journey on my way, which is easy to travel.

For I take my seat between the two ways of life and death, and I lead them astray to journey in the way of life, and I lead them on their way those who are travelling on the road of death. I strengthen them also, and I make them valiant so that they may go forward easily in my paths. When they are bowed down and labor under my yoke I sow evil and abominable vices among them like thorns and brambles. When I gathered from seed of this kind the fruit of such crops, which they believe to be pleasant, they deny the way of truth, because evil men are taken in the snares of the filthiness of abominable things. But you, O Macarius, have never once inclined yourself to obey me. By your obedience I might be able to find even a little consolation. But you burn me up

wholly by means of the mighty armour of the humility which you bear, for this reason I haste to depart to mine own subjects. For you possess a good Lord, and you have mighty companions, who tranquilly and happily serve God, and who protect thee as a beloved son.

When the chosen athlete had heard these things, he made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, "Blessed be God, Who has made those who have put their hopes in Him to make you a mockery and a laughing stock, and Who has preserved me wholly and completely from your craft so that while turning aside from the same I was able to advance in the good fight. Having fought and conquered I shall receive a crown from the good Lord Whom I possess. Flee then, and get afar off, O you who are envious of the things, which are good, for Christ will make an end of you. You may not dare to attack any of those who worship Him. For sufficient for you are those whom you have drawn to yourself by flattery, through your evil wiles, and their own sluggish will. You made them to travel on the flat, wide road of destruction. You shall not then dare to draw near to those who of their own will have elected to travel in the narrow, straight, troubled, and vexatious way of life. Or those who have fear, and depart from those who dwell in waste places and in deserts." When the blessed man said these things, straightaway the Calumniator disappeared. The holy man Macarius bowed on his knee, prayed saying, "Glory is to You, O Christ, You who are the Refuge of those who are overtaken by storms. You who are the straight way of those who sin. You who are the Redeemer of those who flee to You for refuge, now, always, and for ever and ever! Amen."

43. Of Abba Mark the Less, the Disciple of Abba Sylvanus

THEY USED TO SAY CONCERNING ABBA SYLVANUS that he wished to depart to Syria. His disciple Mark said to him, "Not only I do not wish you to depart from this place, O father, but also I will not permit you to go now. Wait then here for three days more" On the third day Mark died in peace.

44. Of Abba Paul the Simple, the Disciple of Saint Anthony

THE BLESSED MAN, PAUL THE SIMPLE, the disciple of the holy man Anthony, used to relate to the fathers the following matter, recting: I once went to a certain monastery that I might visit the brethren for profit spiritually. After some conversation on the matter, they went into the holy church that

they might form a congregation as usual, and perform the service of the Holy Sacraments. The blessed Paul looked at and scrutinized carefully each one of them, so that he might see in what frame of mind he was going, for he had the gift, given to him by God, of looking into the soul of every man, and knowing what that man's soul was like. This is like the power we have of looking upon the faces of each other. He saw that every man was going in with a glorious aspect of soul, and with face full of light. Also, the angel of each man was rejoicing in him, with the exception of one whose face was sick and afflicted. This very one's whole body was in darkness, and devils held upon both of his hands. They were lifting him up, dragging him towards them, and they had put a ring in his nose. He saw also that the holy angel of this man was a long way from him, and the angel followed after him sadly and sorrowfully.

When the blessed Paul saw these things he wept, and struck himself upon the breast many times. He sat down before the church, and cried unceasingly for the man who had appeared to him in this state. Those who saw the old man became greatly astonished suddenly, and especially at his swift change from happiness to weeping and tears, they asked him, entreated, and begged him to tell them what he had seen. They besought him also, with one voice, to go into the congregation with them. Paul drove them away from him, and would not let himself be persuaded to do this, so he sat down outside the church, held his peace, cried aloud and groaned loudly concerning that which had appeared to him.

After a short time, when the service ended, and all the fathers were coming out, Paul scrutinized carefully each one of them, so that he might see in what manner would come out those whom he had seen go in, and whether it would be with the same countenance as they had gone in the church with. He saw again that man whom he had seen go in, and whose body before he had entered into the church was in darkness, behold, he came out from the church with his face full of light, and with white body. Additionally, the devils followed him at a distance, and his guardian angel was quite close to him, and walked with him. Saint Paul was glad and rejoiced greatly over that man. Then the holy man Paul leaped up, stood there glad and rejoicing, he cried out blessing God, saying, "Hail to the overflowing mercy of God! Hail to the immeasurable goodness! Hail to His rich treasures! Hail to His pleasure, which is beyond measure!" He ran up and stood upon a lofty platform, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Come, and see how awful are the works of God, and how greatly they are worthy of admiration! Come, and see Him Who wishes that all the children of men should live, and should turn to the knowledge of the truth! Come, let us kneel and worship Him, saying, "You are He who alone is

able to forgive sins.” Therefore all the fathers ran diligently so that they might hear what he was saying. When they had all gathered together, the holy man Paul related to them the things, which he had seen both when they went into the church. When each one of them came out, they entreated that brother to tell them what was the reason of that complete change, and of the gladness which God bestowed upon him so quickly.

The man, being afraid lest he might be rebuked by the blessed Paul, related the following things concerning himself before all of them, without any concealment whatsoever, saying, “I am a sinful man, and for a long time past, even to the present day, I lived in fornication. When I went into the church, I heard the Book of the Prophet Isaiah read, that is to say, I heard God speaking through him, and saying, ‘Wash, and be clean, and remove your evil deeds from before Mine eyes. Hate the evil things, learn to do good, seek out judgement, and pass righteous sentences upon those who are afflicted. If your sins be red like crimson, they shall become white as snow. If you are willing to hearken to Me, you shall eat of the good things of the earth.’ When I had heard and read these words from the Prophet, as having heard God speaking, I immediately repented in my soul sincerely. I was sighing in my heart saying, “You are the God Who did come into the world to make sinners to live. Make manifest in me the things, which You have promised in Your Prophet. Fulfil them in me, even though I be unworthy of the same, for I am a sinner. For behold, I promise, and I enter into a covenant with You. I will thrust this promise down into my soul. I will acknowledge it, that from now onward. I will never commit such wickedness, but will keep myself remote from all iniquity. I will serve you from this day onwards with a clean conscience. O My Master, from this day, and from this hour, accept me, for I am penitent. I will make supplication to You. I will remove myself from all sin.” Therefore, with such promises and covenants I came out from the church determined in my soul that I would never again do anything which would injure my fear of Him.” When all the fathers heard this, they all cried out with a loud voice, saying to God, “O Lord, how great are Your works! You have created all of them in wisdom.”

Therefore, O Christians, since we know from the Holy Scriptures and from divine revelations how great is the grace, which God dispenses to those who truly seek Him for refuge, He who blot out their former sins by means of repentance. Also how according to His promise, He rewards with good things, and neither take vengeance according to what is just, nor bring upon men a punishment for their former sins. Let us not be in despair of our lives. For, even as He promised by the hand of Isaiah the Prophet, He will make clean those

who have toiled in sin. He will make them bright and white like clean wool and snow. He will make them happy with the blessings of heaven. Moreover, God asserts with oaths by the hand of the Prophet Ezekiel that He does not desire their destruction, for He says, "As I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of a sinner, but that he should turn from his evil way and live."

BOOK II - PART TWO

The Rules of Pachomius at Tabenna

1. The "Asketikon", the History of the Monks of Tabenna

IN MY OPINION, THE THINGS, WHICH I AM NOW ABOUT TO WRITE are able to assist us greatly if we indeed follow them. Moreover, they will make the hearer more vigilant in respect of the contemplation of the things, which have been said. And if we were to excuse ourselves through negligence from writing them down this act would bring danger upon him that made such an excuse, and therefore, although we can only advance from the beginning but a very little way with the living word, we will declare a few of the earlier things.

It was a custom with the God-loving brother, the holy man, Abba Pachomius, to gather the brethren together every evening in a duly appointed place in the monastery where they might hear his doctrine. Once when they were all assembled according to their want in order to hear Abba Pachomius, he commanded Theodore, a man who had lived in the monastery for twenty years, to speak to the brethren. Immediately he spoke to them concerning the things, which were to be employed as helpers. He made no mention of not stumbling. Some of the aged sages who saw what had taken place did not wish to listen to him. They said within themselves, "What he is teaching us

is for novices. We need not listen to him." They left the congregation of the brethren, departed from that place and went to their cells.

When the brethren had been dismissed from the hearing of the sermon, the Abba sent and called those who had departed and did not wish to hear Theodore. When they had come in the presence of the holy man, he asked them saying, "Why did you leave us and depart to your cells?" They said, "Because you have made a young man our teacher, although all the old men were standing there, and other brethren who were much older than he. You commanded a young man to speak to us." When the Abba heard these things he groaned, and said, "Do you know how wickedness first began to take hold in the world?" They replied, "What were they?" He answered, saying, "By pride. It began when that bright star, which used to shine in the morning, fell from heaven, and dashed in pieces on the earth. Or, have you never heard that which is written, 'The man who is haughty in heart is an abominable thing before the Lord? For whosoever exalts himself shall be abased. But he who abases himself shall be exalted. ' Therefore, deliver yourselves from your false superiority, for do you not know that the mother of the beginning of wickedness is pride? You did not only leave Theodore and depart from him, but you fled and departed from the Word of God, and you fell away from the Holy Spirit. O you truly wretched men, who deserve sorrow of every kind, how is it that you cannot understand that it was Satan who was working in you, and that, because of this, you made yourselves to be remote from God? Oh, what a great and wonderful thing it is that God humbled Himself, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. He put on His body and dwelt in Him. He became obedient even to death for our sakes! Yet we who are by nature low puff ourselves up with pride! He who is high above all things, and exceedingly great, turned from the ordinary course of His greatness and in humility fashioned the world. He was able to destroy everything, which exists by a glance! Yet we who are nothing make ourselves proud, being ignorant that in thus doing we are sinking ourselves into the depths of the earth! Do not you observe that I stand and incline my ear to the teaching of Theodore? Assuredly I say to you, that I have been greatly helped by him. For I did not ask him to address you because I thought lightly of him, but because I expected to be helped myself by his words; how very much more, then, is it right that you should listen to his words with a ready mind and absolute humility? Assuredly I, who am your father in the Lord, am as one who does not know his right hand from his left. Therefore I listen to him with all my soul. Therefore, before God I say to you that if you show great repentance for this folly which you have committed, and if you weep and mourn for yourselves because of it in

such a way that you be edified, that which has happened will be forgiven you. If you do not, then go to perdition.”

2. Of Sylvanus the Actor

ONCE THERE WAS A MAN AMONG THE BRETHREN whose name was Sylvanus. He had worn the garb of a monk for a period of twenty years. He was originally an actor. At the beginning of his life as a monk, he was exceedingly anxious about his soul. After a short time he lapsed and began to be so negligent about his redemption that he wanted to make merry and to enjoy himself. Additionally, he used to sing fearlessly among the brethren, snatches or the lewd and ribald songs, which he used to hear in the theatre. Abba Pachomius, the holy man, called this brother before the brethren, and commanded him to strip off the garb of a monk, and to go away from among the brethren and from the monastery. That brother fell down at the feet of Pachomius and entreated him, saying, “O father, if you will forgive me this once, and do not cast me away, you have it from me that from this time forward I will repent of those things in which I have shown negligence. In such a manner you shall be able to see the change, which has taken place in my soul.”

The holy man answered him, saying, “Do you know how much I have borne from you, how many times I have admonished you, and how many times I have beaten you? I am a man who had no wish to stretch out my hands in a matter of this kind, because when, of necessity, I was obliged to act thus towards you, my soul suffered far more by the mention of association with passion than you did, although the stripes were laid upon you. I beat you for the sake of your salvation in God, so that by that means I might be able to correct you of your folly. But since, even though I admonished you, you did not change your course of life. You did not follow after spiritual excellence, even though I entreated you so to do. Since even when beaten, you were not afraid. How is it possible for me to forgive you anymore?”

Sylvanus multiplied his entreaties. He begged for his forgiveness long and earnestly. He promised to amend his life henceforward. The Abba demanded a surety from him that after he was forgiven he would no more continue his evil behaviour. When the venerable man Petronius had made himself a surety for him concerning the things, which Sylvanus had promised, the blessed man forgave him. Sylvanus, having been held worthy of forgiveness, contended with all his soul, and to such good purpose, that he became the pattern of all excellence of the fear of God, both among all the younger and all the elder

brethren. The virtue, which surpassed all the other virtues, which he possessed, was that of absolute humility. Tears flowed from his eyes so unceasingly that even when he was eating with the brethren he was not able to restrain his weeping. His tears were mingled with his food. When the brethren told him that he should not behave thus before the face of strangers (i.e. visitors), or before other people, he took an oath, saying, "I have sought many times to restrain my tears for this reason. I have never been able to do so." Then the brethren said, "Is not it possible for him who repents to seek to be alone? Would not it be better for him to act thus when he was praying with the brethren than when he was eating at the table with them? Is not it possible for the soul to weep continually with tears other than those which are visible?" Then turning to him, they said, "We wish to know what you have to say on the matter. For you are so overwhelmed with your tears that many of us who see you in this state are ashamed to eat and take our fill."

Then Sylvanus said to those who had asked him those questions, "Do you not wish me to weep when I see holy men waiting upon me, the dust of whose feet I am unworthy to sweep away? Is it not proper that I should weep over myself? I weep then, O my brethren, because a man from the theatre is being ministered by holy men as those. I am afraid lest I be smitten even as were Dathan and Abiram. I weep especially because, being in ignorance, I cared so little at the beginning about the redemption (or salvation) of my soul, that I came in danger of being expelled by the brethren from the monastery. I was obliged to give surety for my better behavior, and to take awful oaths that I would never again treat my life with contempt. For this reason I am not ashamed to weep, and I have turned away from such things, for I know my sins. If I was obliged to deliver up my soul I should find no happiness in heaven."

As this man strove nobly in this manner, the Abba himself bore testimony before all the brethren, and spoke thus, "Behold, I bear testimony before God that, from the time when this monastery came into existence, among all the brethren who have lived with me here, there had been none who had resembled completely the example which I have conceived in my mind with the exception of one." When the brethren heard these things some of them thought that the one man of whom he spoke was Theodore. Others thought he was Petronius, while others thought he was Arsenius. At length, Theodore asked the holy man of which monk he had spoken when he said this thing. The Abba did not wish to say. But because Theodore and the other great fathers continued to entreat him to tell them, for they wished to learn who he was, Abba answered them saying, "If I knew that vainglory would come to him of whom I am about to

peak, and that he would be greatly praised, I would not show you who he is. But because I know that the more he is praised, the more humble he will become, the more he will think scorn of himself, and because I wish you to emulate his example, I will, before you all, fearlessly ascribe blessing to him. You, O Theodore, and all those, who like you, strive in the fight, bound the Calumniator with fetters like a kid of the goats. Place the Calumniator under your feet and daily trample upon him as you trample upon dust. If you are the least unmindful of yourselves, the Calumniator, who had been cast under your feet, will rise up again, and will set himself against you like an armed man.

But this young man Sylvanus, who but a short time since was about to be expelled from the monastery, had, by his strenuousness, so completely subjugated the Calumniator, and slew him. The Calumniator will never again be able to approach him, for he had vanquished him utterly by his exceedingly great humility. You have humbled yourselves as if you possessed works of righteousness, and the addition which you would make to your spiritual excellence is reduced, for you rely upon the things which have already been performed by you. This young man, however, much he strives, never shows himself to the gaze of his fellows, and he thinks with all his mind and soul that he is a useless and contemptible being. Tears are always near to him because he is always belittling himself, and because he says that he is unworthy of the things, which are visible. You, in your knowledge, your patient endurance, your strivings against the Calumniator, which cannot be measured, are better than he is. But he had surpassed you in humility, because he, in this manner, cuts off for the Calumniator nothing but humility, the power of action, which arises from the whole soul."

Therefore when Sylvanus strove in this manner for eight years, he completed his fight, and laid down his life in such a way that his servant, a mighty man of God, testified concerning his departure, and said that an endless throng of holy angels, with great rejoicing and singing, received his soul as a choice sacrifice, and that they offered it up unto God like the marvelous incense, which is found among the children of men.

3. Of a Certain Sinner who Died

IT HAPPENED THAT ABBA PACHOMIUS went to another monastery to visit the brethren who were there. As he was on his journey he met the funeral of a certain brother of the monastery. The monks were going to the funeral and were singing as they went. There were also among them the parents of

the man who died. The brethren saw from a distance the holy man coming towards them. They set down the bier upon the ground so that he might come and pray over him. When the blessed man had come, he said a prayer, and commanded the brethren not to sing any more Psalms and hymns over him. He also commanded them to bring the garments of him who died. They brought them. In the presence of them all he ordered the men to burn the garments. Then, when the garments were burned, he commanded that the dead body be taken and buried without any further singing. The brethren, the deceased's parents and kinsfolk, threw themselves down at his feet and entreated him to permit them to sing over him. He remained unmoved. The parents of the deceased said to Abba Pachomius, "What have you done, O father? This is a new thing, and you are sending away our son in an unlawful fashion. It does not befit your holiness to display such a want of compassion to this dead man. This savage cruelty is likely to bring about sorrow. Even an enemy who sees the dead body of his adversary knows how to show pity many times more, although his disposition be unutterable and immovable. We have seen a new sight with you, O Christians, the like of which had never been seen, even among the barbarians. Through this want of compassion on your part you have made to cling to the family of the dead man a disgrace, which shall never be blotted out. Would that we had never seen you this day! For then our house, which had ever possessed an untarnished name, would not have inherited disgrace. Would that our poor son had never come into you savage hands! For then he would not have bequeathed to us this everlasting sorrow. We beseech you now, since you had caused even his clothes to be burned, to allow a Psalm to be said over him."

Abba Pachomius answered and said to them, "O my brethren, in truth I have more compassion on him who lied here than you have. But because, like a father, I am showing exceedingly great care on his behalf, I have commanded these things to be done. You would take care of the body which is visible, but I strive for his soul which is invisible. If you sing Psalms over him he will receive the greater torments, and a reckoning will be demanded from him because of the Psalms, which have been sung, for he did not depart with the power of the Psalms on him. If then you wish to make an addition to his everlasting sufferings, sing Psalms. But I tell you, in truth, that if you do indeed sing Psalms over him, he will certainly suffer more pain because of them. He will curse you. Because I know what will benefit his soul I take no care for his dead body whatsoever. If I permit you to sing Psalms, I shall be found to be in the sight of God as one who strives to please the children of men, because for the sake of gratifying men I have treated with contempt what will benefit the soul,

which is about to be punished in judgment. For because God is a fountain of grace He seeks excuses on which He can lay hold in order to pour out upon us the abundant streams of His grace. If then, we, who have been held to be worthy by God to become acquainted with the art of divine healing, do not apply the binding up which is suitable to the wound. We shall, like those who despise God, hear that which is written, 'Those who despised God saw, marveled at the wonderful thing, and were destroyed.' For this reason then, that is to say, that we may lighten his punishment, I entreat you to bury the dead man without any singing of Psalms. The good God knows that in return for this slight which had come upon him, we are giving him rest and are calling him to life. Had he listened to me on the several occasions on which I admonished him, he would never have come to this pass."

When the blessed man had said these things they carried him to the mountain without the singing of Psalms, where he was buried. The holy man passed several days in that monastery in admonishing and teaching each one of the brethren the fear of God, the way to strive rightly against the Calumniator, against his arts, wiles, guile, and how, by the might of the Lord, we shall be able to bring to naught beforehand the things which are cared for by him.

4. Of the Funeral of a Certain Holy Man who Died

WHILE ABBA PACHOMIUS WAS STILL THERE he heard that a certain brother from the monastery of Beth Raya was sick, and it was said to him, "He wishes to see you and to be blessed by you before he dies." When the man of God heard these things he rose up, and departed on the journey. When he was about two miles from the monastery, the holy man heard a holy voice in the air. He lifted up his eyes and saw the soul of the sick brother with the holy angels, singing hymns, and being borne aloft to a blessed and divine life. The brethren who were accompanying him neither heard nor saw anything. When the holy man had stood there and gazed for a long time towards the east, they said to him, "Why do you stand here, O father? Let us hurry on so that we may reach him while he is still alive." He said to them, "We shall not reach him there, for I have just seen him ascending to everlasting life. Depart then, O my children, to your monastery." When those brethren entreated him to tell them in what form he had seen the soul of the brother who had died, he said to them, "In a certain form." When they had heard this they departed to their monastery. They enquired, and ascertained exactly from the brethren who were in the monastery, concerning the hour where Abba had spoken to

them, and then they recognized that the things which had been said to them about the brother who had died were true.

5. Of the Things Said by Abba Pachomius in the Air by the Devils

WHEN THE HOLY OLD MAN WAS JOURNEYING to his monastery, located by the side of a desert called Ammon, certain legions of devils rose up against him. Devils thronged him, both on his right hand and on his left, and others ran in front of him, saying, "Behold the blessed man of God." They acted in this way because they were plotting to sow the seeds of vainglory in him. He knew the evil character of their cunning. As they cried out these things he cried out to God, and made confession of his sins. Then having brought to naught the evil cunning of these wicked devils, he answered and said to them, "You are not able to persuade me to indulge in vainglory. O you wicked ones. I know well my iniquities, and I know well that it is right for me to weep concerning them continually, and concerning the punishment, which is forever. I have no need of fluent words and cunning error from you. Your work is the destruction of souls. I am not to be carried away therefore by your praising, for I know well your cunning minds, O evil ones." Though the holy man Pachomius spoke these words to them, their audacious acts did not cease. They clung around the blessed man until he drew near his monastery.

6. Of the Things Done by Abba Pachomius

WHEN THE BRETHREN WENT OUT TO MEET THE HOLY MAN and to salute him, a certain young man also went out with them to salute Abba Pachomius. He began to complain to him, saying, "Assuredly, O father, from the time when you did depart to visit the brethren until this present they have not cooked neither vegetables nor crushed peas." The old man answered and said to him readily and pleasantly, "My son, do not grieve, for from this time forward I will make them to cook these things for you." Having gone around through the monastery Abba Pachomius went to the place where the food was kept, and he found the cook plaiting a mat of palm leaves. He said to him, "How long is it since you had cooked vegetables for the brethren?" He answered, "Two months." Abba said to him, "Had you acted thus in spite of the command and ordinances of the holy fathers which enjoin that vegetables shall be cooked for the brethren every Saturday and every Sunday?" The cook

answered saying, "Truly, O father, I wanted to cook some vegetables on each of these days. But because I saw that when they were cooked they were not eaten (for all the brethren, so to speak, were restraining themselves, and were not eating cooked food), except by the young men who usually ate them, and when I saw that when they were not eaten they were thrown away, I cooked no more so that all the expense and all the trouble might be avoided. We pour into the cooked food of the brethren forty boxes of oil daily. When I saw that the food was not eaten I did not cook it, for I did not consider it to be right that we should throw away and waste such costly things. Moreover, because I could not sit idle I began to plait a mat with the brethren, for I thought that one man would be sufficient in the kitchen to prepare the less important meals for brethren, like, chopped garlic, mountain herbs mixed with vinegar and olive oil, and herbs from the garden."

When the holy man had heard these things he said to the cook, "How many mats have you made? You who belong to the kitchen must have been continually at this work." The cook said, "Five hundred." Abba Pachomius said to him, "Bring them here, for I wish to count them." Having brought the mats he ordered them to be thrown into the fire. Then, when they had all been consumed, Abba Pachomius said to them, "Why have you forsaken the ordinance which had been given to you for the government of the brethren through your satanic minds? I have destroyed pitilessly the labor of your hands, and have burned it in the fire, so that you may learn what it is for a man to treat lightly the laws of the fathers, which have been given for the benefit of souls. How great is the help which you have removed from the brethren through ceasing your cooking! Have you forgotten that a man had power over a desire for food, and that he who restrains himself from such and such a food, for God's sake, shall obtain from God wages, which are not small? While he who has not received authority, and who denies himself by force or necessity will seek for wages in return for this in vain? Do not you know that, if cooked meat be placed upon the table, and the brethren do not eat it because they restrain themselves for God's sake, they shall receive abundant wages? But if cooked meats are not given to them, because they have not seen them abstinence and self-denial can never be reckoned unto them. For the sake of eighty boxes of oil, for such is the excuse which you have made, you have cut off all the preparation of all the brethren. I would rather that the world should be wasted than that one small spiritual virtue should be cut off from their souls. I therefore truly wish to have food in abundance cooked daily and set before the brethren, so that in practicing abstinence every day, and in restraining themselves from partaking of what has been given to them, they

may make an addition daily to their spiritual excellence. For if a man should happen to fall sick, and did not desire to go to the hospital, if he should come to the common table in order to partake of the vegetables which are usually given to the brethren, and find nothing available there, what would happen to me? Would not a brother be offended in not finding at the common table that of which he was in need? Do you not know that young men especially cannot continue in spiritual excellence unless they enjoy some small gratification or a little consolation from their food?"

7. Of the Revelation Abba Pachomius Received

WHEN THE OLD MAN HAD SAID THESE THINGS to the brethren, the doorkeeper came to him, and said, "Certain travellers, who are men of importance, have come here, and they wish to meet you." He said, "Call them here." When they had entered into the monastery he saluted them with the brethren. After they had seen all the brotherhood, and had gone round about among all the cells of the brethren they wanted to converse with him by themselves. When they had taken their seats in a secluded chamber, there came to the old man a strong smell of uncleanness, but he did not know where such uncleanness came from, though he thought that it must arise from them because he was speaking with them face to face. He was unable to learn the cause of the smell by the supplication which he made to God, for he perceived that their speech was fruitful of thought, and that their minds were familiar with the Scriptures. He was not acquainted with their intellectual uncleanness. After he had spoken to them about many things out of the Divine Books, the ninth hour had drawn near. They rose up that they might come to their own place. The Abba entreated them to partake some food, but they did not accept his petition, saying, that they were in duty bound to arrive home before sunset. They prayed, saluted us, and they departed.

The Abba, in order to learn the cause of the uncleanness of those men, went into his cell, and prayed to God. He knew immediately that it was the doctrine of wickedness which arose from their souls that sent out in such an unclean smell. He then went out from his cell immediately and pursued those men. Having overtaken them, he said to them, "I beg of you to allow me to ask you one question." They said to him, "Speak." He said to them, "Do you call that which is written in the works of Origen heresy?" When they had heard this question they denied and said that they did not. Then the holy man said to them, "Behold, I take you to witness before God, that every man who reads

and accepts the work of Origen, shall certainly arrive in the fire of Sheol, and his inheritance shall be everlasting darkness. What I know from God I have made you to be witnesses of, and I am therefore not to be condemned by God on this account, and you yourselves know about it. Behold, I have made you to hear the truth. If you believe me, and if you wish truly to gratify God, take all the writings of Origen and cast them in the fire. Never seek to read them again." When Abba Pachomius had said these things he left them.

8. Of Another Revelation Abba Pachomius Received

WHEN ABBA PACHOMIUS HAD GONE INTO THE MONASTERY, he found the brethren gathered together for prayer, and he drew near them, and said all the prayers. When the brethren went out to eat, he remained in that chamber by himself, in order that he might recite to the end of the prayers of the congregation according to custom. He shut the door and prayed to God that he might have information about the settlements, which were to come subsequently to the brethren. He had prolonged his prayer from the tenth hour until the time when the brethren beat the boards to summon the brethren to the service of the night. He was praying until midnight when suddenly appeared to him a vision, which made known to him concerning the settlements of the brethren subsequently. The vision showed him that they would live rightly in Christ, and an increase was about to take place in the religious houses. He saw a congregation of brethren, which was endless, and the men were making their way along a deep and gloomy valley. Many of them came with the intention of going up out of that valley, but were unable to do so. Many of them met each other face to face, but because of the great density of the darkness, they did not recognize each other. Many fell down through exhaustion, while others were crying out with the doleful voice of lamentation. A very few of them, with the greatest difficulty, and with much toil, were able to go up out of that valley, and immediately the light met them. When they had come to the light, they gave thanks to God mightily. Thus, the blessed man knew the things which were going to happen to the brethren in later times, and the absolute supineness, which was to exist in those times, the blindness of error, and the removal of the shepherds which was about to happen to them.

He knew that the wicked were to have dominion over the good whom they were to vanquish through their great numbers. Those who were to come afterwards would be mere imitations of monks. We set down in writing the

memorial of these things lest the wicked shall be governors over the brethren. Those who are without knowledge shall have authority over the monasteries and shall strive for the mastery. The good shall be persecuted by the wicked, they shall not have freedom of speech in the monasteries, and the divine things which have been said shall be turned to the things of men. Therefore, when the blessed man knew these things, he cried out to God with tears, saying, "O Lord God, who do maintain the universe. If it is indeed to be thus, why did You permit these monasteries to come into being? If in those times where the wicked governors rule over the brethren, what is to become of those who are to be governed by them? For when the blind leads the blind both fall into the ditch. I have toiled absolutely in vain. Remember, O Lord, my works, and those of these brethren, who submit to be governed with all their souls. Remember that You did promise me, saying, 'Until the end of the world I will allow this spiritual seed to exist.' You know, O my Lord, that from the time when I put on the garb of the monks, I have never satisfied myself with any growth on the earth, not even with water."

9. Another Revelation on this Matter which Brought Consolation

WHEN HE HAD SAID THESE THINGS, Abba Pachomius heard a voice saying, "You boast yourself, O Pachomius. You are a man. Ask mercy for yourself, because everything stands by compassion." When the blessed man heard these things, he immediately threw himself on his face upon the ground, asked God for mercy, saying, "O Lord, who do sustain the universe, send Your mercies to me, and never take them away from me, for I know that without Your mercy nothing can possibly exist." Having said these words immediately there stood by his side two angels of God, and there was with them a Young Man, who had an unspeakable face, and an appearance, which cannot be described. On His head was a crown of thorns. The angels made Pachomius to stand up, and said to him, "Because you have asked God to send you His mercy, behold, this is His mercy, the Lord of glory, Jesus Christ, the Only One, His Son, Whom He sent into the world, and Whom you crucified; and you set a crown of thorns upon His head." Pachomius said to the Young Man, "I entreat You, O my Lord, and Your holy nature, to remember that I did not crucify You." The Young Man relaxed His face a little in a smile, and said to him, "I know that you did not crucify Me, but Your fathers did. Be of good courage, however, for the root of Your seed shall never come to an end. Your seed shall be preserved upon the earth even to the end of the world. The seeds which shall burst into

life in those times, through the abundance of darkness shall be found to be more excellent than those of this present time. They shall be more completely subject to rule; for at this present, because you are to them as a light, which is before the eyes. They lead lives of great excellence and according to rule, and they lean on your light. But those who shall come after them, and who shall live in a region of darkness, if with a good intent and from the mind voluntarily they run towards the truth, even though no man directs them, they shall from out of the darkness draw near to the truth. Assuredly, I say to you, that they shall be free and shall be with those who now lead a blameless life of the highest character. They shall be held to be yours of forgiveness."

Then having said these things immediately the Young Man went up into the heavens. The heavens were opened, and the air shone so brightly that it is impossible for us to describe with human words the splendor of that light. When the Abba marveled at the things he heard, immediately they beat the board to summon the brethren to the service of the night.

10. Of the Words of Doctrine Abba Pachomius Spoke

WHEN THE BRETHREN HAD COME TO THE CONGREGATION of the night, and the service for the night also was ended, they sat down to listen to his words; and he opened his mouth, and said to them, "O my brethren, so long as you have breath in your bodies strive for your redemption; and before there comes the hour where we shall have to weep for our souls let us cultivate spiritual excellence with a ready mind. I say to you that, if you knew what good things were in heaven, the glory which is laid up for the saints, how those who have fallen are punished by God, and the tortures which are laid up for those who have been neglectful, and especially for those who having known the truth have not, as was right, guided themselves thereby, instead of inheriting the blessedness which is reserved for the saints, you would do so. Flee then from the punishments, which are in these tortures! Consider the graves, and the resurrection of the children of men, who are nothing! Why then does man, who is dust, vaunt himself with vainglory? Why then does he, who is altogether stinkiness, exalt himself? Let us weep for ourselves whilst we still have the time, so that when our departure comes near we may not be found asking God for more time in which to repent. A wretched thing is that soul, and greatly to be blamed, which has left the world without being dedicated to God, or having not lived worthily of its promise. Let us not then, O my brethren, allow this world, which is a small and a contemptible

thing, and which resembles a fleeting shadow, to steal away from us blessed and immortal life. Assuredly I fear lest your fathers in the flesh, who lived in the world, who were carried away by the anxious cares and afflictions of the world, who imagined about you that you were near to the Lord, whereby you received a pledge that you would enter into a life of blessedness, will be more your than you are of assistance in the world which is to come.

At that time they will be found condemning you, and saying what is written, 'How he has disgraced you, and put you greatly to shame. The fire has blazed out on you, and your branches have been destroyed, and therefore you have become a thing of spoil, over which the lions roar and send out their voices.' Therefore, O my beloved, be like those who are good, and let the crown of your head be exalted. The cities, which are towards the south, how are they to be taken? There is none who will open to you. The sinner shall be removed because he does not see the glory of the Lord. Behold, you have heard, therefore, O my brethren, let us strive with all our souls, set death before our eyes, and fasten our gaze upon the terrible tortures of Sheol, so that by means of them the mind may arrive at the understanding, which bears away the soul from care. When the soul weeps the mind makes it to be a spectator, and with earthly things it enriches it without wandering to God. Not this only, for when the soul does these things in humility, it persuades it to action, which is free from every kind of worldly mind, and to contempt instead of vainglory.

Let the soul then, O my brethren, practice philosophy each day in respect of this solid body of ours. When we come to our beds in the evening let it say to each one of the members of the body, 'O legs, how much power have you to stand up, and to move yourselves before you die and become things without motion? Will you not stand up with good will for your Lord?' Let it say to the other members, 'O hands, there comes an hour when you shall be dissolved and motionless, shall never be clasped in each other again, and shall not have any movement whatsoever. Why then before you fall into that hour and are cut off do you not stretch yourselves out to the Lord?' To the whole body shall the soul speak thus, 'O body, before we are separated and are removed far away from each other, and before I descend into Sheol, and receive everlasting fetters under darkness, and before you are changed into the primal matter of which you were made, and are cast out upon the earth to become filthiness and corruption, and to decay. Rise up boldly to worship the Lord without dislike. Take my intelligence, by means of tears, and make known to your Lordship your free will, by servitude. Bear me with a good will that I may give thanks to God before you are crushed under burden of other things. Seek to lie down, take your rest, and condemn me to everlasting torment. For there are times

when that heavy sleep will confuse you. If you listen to me, we shall enjoy happiness together in the inheritance of blessing. If you do not listen to me, then, woe is me that I have ever been fettered by you, for on your account I, the wretched thing, shall be condemned.'

If you act thus daily, and consecrate yourselves, assuredly you shall become real temples of God. Since God dwells in you, the cunning and wiles of satan shall not be able to injure you. For instead of having a myriad of teachers, the word of God shall dwell in you, teach you more than they, and make you exceedingly wise by His own knowledge. It is unable to speak all the things which belong to human speech, but this holy, divine, pure, and spotless Spirit shall teach you, as the Apostle says, 'For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself prays for us with groaning, which cannot be uttered.' There are many other helpful things which it would be possible for us to say to you by God's grace, yet because our mind does not urge us to these same things we must direct our discourse to other matters."

11. Pachomius and the Wheat

WHEN A FAMINE TOOK PLACE IN THE DAYS OF PACHOMIUS, and the brethren had no wheat, as no wheat could be found in all Egypt, the holy old man sent to call one of the brethren that he might go around in the cities and villages and seek for wheat to buy. He gave him a sum of one hundred dinars to purchase of the wheat. Having gone around in very many places, the man who had been entrusted with this work came to a city called Armutin. By the Providence of God he found there a certain governor of the state, who was an exceedingly reverent man, a fearer of God, and who had heard of the rule of the holy man Pachomius and of the brethren. This Governor was in charge of the wheat, which belonged to the community. The brother approached him, and entreated him to sell him wheat to the value of one hundred dinars. The Governor said to him, "Truthfully, O my brother, if I had wheat of my own, or even some belonging to my own children, I would give it to you, for I have heard concerning your godly and spiritual rule of life. Listen to what I am going to say to you. The wheat, which has been placed under my charge belongs to the community. It will not be required this year by the Prefect. If you wish to take it I have the power over the wheat of the community. I will keep it back until the time comes for it to be laid up in the granary. If you know that you will be able to return it by that time, take as much of it as you wish."

The brother said to him, "I do not wish for you to do thus for me, for I am unable to return so large a quantity as that which I wish to take. If you will sell me wheat to the value of one hundred dinars, at the price which you wish good and well, but if you are not in any way able to keep back the wheat, which belongs to the community until the time for storing it in the granary, you are right in refusing me." The Governor said to him: "Yes, I have power to keep back the wheat, and not only wheat to the value of one hundred dinars but, if you wish, a similar quantity. If you will take the wheat you will do me an act of grace, only pray for me." When the brother said that they only have this amount of money, the Governor listened, and said, "Have no care about this matter, for whenever you are able to bring me the price of the wheat do so, at the rate of thirteen ardebs a dinar. In no other place in Egypt you will obtain more than five ardebs a dinar." The brother journeyed by water to the monastery with great joy bringing the wheat with him. When Abba heard that a boat full of wheat was about to arrive, and the manner in which it had been bought, he sent immediately to the boat and said, "You shall not bring one grain of the wheat into the monastery, neither shall he who had bought the wheat come into my presence until he had returned it to its place. He who has acted thus has committed great wickedness. Not only this he has done, but he has also taken wheat to the value of one hundred darics more than the hundred dinars which I gave him. I never ordered him to do this. But in carrying out his own desires he wished to have a super abundance. Having become inflamed by love of gain he had brought us into subjection and laid us under condemnation. Moreover, he did not approach the generosity of the seller of the wheat satisfactorily, for he acted in a greedy manner. He had brought more wheat than he needed, and on his own responsibility he undertook to pay back what we could never return. Not only that, supposing that from some human causes an accident had happened, and the boat had sunk in the river, what could we have done to make good the loss? Should not we all have become slaves? Therefore let him sell all the wheat which he had brought to the laity who are in this district at the rate at which he had taken it from him that entrusted it to him, that is to say, at thirteen ardebs a dinar. And after he had sold them, let him take the gold and carry it to him that gave him credit. With the one hundred dinars, which are mine, let him buy wheat at the rate at which it is sold everywhere and bring it to me."

The brother did even as Abba said to him, and brought the wheat, which he bought at a rate of five and a half ardebs a dinar. From that time Abba did not allow that brother to go outside the monastery on business for the brethren. He remained inside and the Abba appointed other brethren to render service

of the kind.

12. Pachomius and the Wages of the Brethren

THAT SAME BROTHER WHO HAD BEEN MENTIONED ABOVE took away from the shoemaker to sell a large number of shoes, sandals and other kinds of objects. Having received a larger sum of money than the price the shoemaker had mentioned, the brother brought to him the oboli. When the shoemaker had received the oboli, he reckoned up the price of the leather, the labor of his hands, and the value of the work of the days on which he had made the various kinds of leather objects. He found that it amounted to fifty oboli, whilst the money which he had received was three times that amount. Immediately the shoemaker went to Abba, and said to him, "Assuredly, O father, this brother will never prosper by such acts as these. He still has in him a worldly mind."

When Abba said, "What is this matter which he has behaved so badly?" The shoemaker answered and said, "I gave him sandals and other kinds of leather things to sell, saying, 'Their prices are so much.' He had sold them for a great deal more. He had brought to me a price which is three times as large as that which I mentioned to him." When Abba heard these things, he called the brother and said to him, "Why have you done thus?" The brother said to him, "Father, I told to the people who bought the sandals and the other things the price which this shoemaker told me to take. But they said to me, 'Brother, if these things had been stolen they would be worth a far higher price than what you asked.' And I, feeling ashamed, said to them, 'They are not stolen, but I have been commanded to sell them at the price which I have mentioned. Whatever you wish to give me for them, that give.' They gave me what it pleased them to give me and I never counted the oboli which were given to me by them."

When Abba had heard these things he said, "You have sinned greatly in loving excess. Run quickly, and give back the excess in price to those who gave it to you. Come, repent because of this offence, remain in the monastery and perform the work of your hands. It is not good that you, O my son, should do work again of this kind." The brother did even as the old man had said to him. Then Abba appointed the holy man Zakkai, a good man, who overcame all the praises of the children of men by the manifestation of good deeds. Zakkai administered all the affairs of the monastery.

13. The History of the Apostate Monk

THERE WAS ALSO THERE A CERTAIN BROTHER who cultivated the ascetic life by himself. When he heard of the divine rule of our holy Abba Pachomius, he entreated the Abba to receive him in the monastery. When the Abba received him, and the brother had passed a little time with the brethren, he desired greatly to bear witness (i.e. to become a martyr), although the world and the church were in peace and flourishing, by the grace of God. The blessed Constantine, who had put on Christ, was at that time reigning. This brother was continually entreating the blessed man Pachomius, saying, "Pray for me, O Father, that I may become a martyr." The Abba admonished him as he should not permit this thought to enter his mind again. The Abba said to him, "Brother, endure the strife of the monks mightily and blamelessly. Make your life straight in the way that pleases Christ. Thus, you shall have companionship with the martyrs in heaven."

This desire was becoming stronger each day. The brother was wearying the holy man. The Abba, wishing to drive away this kind of desire from him, said to him, "I will pray for you, but if you seek this thing you will be vanquished. Pull out armour on your soul, lest, when the hour comes, you have to bear witness, or you shall deny Christ. Assuredly you will certainly commit sin, because of your own will you draw near to temptation, although our Lord Jesus commanded us, saying, 'Pray that you fall not into temptation.' " Having said these things, he admonished the brother to take good heed to himself, and not to meditate about martyrdom.

Two years later, certain brethren were sent by the Abba to a village, which was to the south, to collect wreaths to make mats for the monastery. This village was near to the barbarians who were called Blemmyes. Whilst the brethren were there, on an island with large numbers of reeds, the blessed man Pachomius sent the brother who was wishing to suffer martyrdom to carry little money to them for their expenses. The Abba commanded him to take good heed to himself, saying, "The words which are written, 'Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, this is the day of redemption,' have a mystical signification for you, and you shall not commit an offence against any man, so that there may be no blemish in our ministry." The brother took an ass to carry the money and departed to the brethren.

When he arrived at the place, which is opposite the desert, the barbarians came down to the river to draw water. They came upon the brother, and ordered him down from the ass. They bound his hands, took the ass and what was carried. They led him to a neighboring mountain where there were other

barbarians. When the barbarians saw that they came with an ass, they began to make a mock of him, saying, "O monk, come and worship our gods." They slew some beasts, and poured out libations to their gods. They brought the monk and urged him to pour out libations with them. When he did not want to do so, they rose up in wrath and drew their swords in a threatening manner, saying, "If he is unwilling to sacrifice to our gods and to pour out libations to them, we will kill him." Then seeing the drawn swords and the savage disposition of the people, the brother took wine and poured out a libation to their gods. He was afraid of dying the death of the body. He slew his immortal soul by denying God, the Lord of all. When he had done these things the barbarians sent him away.

After descending the mountain, he had come to himself and knew his iniquity and the wickedness he had committed. He rented his garments, beaten himself on his face severely, and came to the monastery. The blessed man knew what happened to him, and went forth to meet him in sore affliction. When the brother saw that the Abba was coming to him, he threw himself on his face on the ground, and shed tears, cried out, saying, "I have sinned against God and against you, O father. I had neither listened to your promise nor to your admonition. Had I listened to you, I would not have had to bear what I have suffered." Having said these words, the Abba said to him, "Arise, O wretched man, you have snatched yourself away from the good things which were awaiting you. In truth these things were laid up for you a crown, which you had cast away from you. You were ready to be reckoned with the holy martyrs, but you had cut yourself off from their blessed companionship. Our Lord Jesus Christ was near with His holy angels, and wished to lay the crown upon your head. Through your momentary turning back you had denied this. In being afraid of death, which you were about to endure, a death you did not seek, you had fallen away from God and destroyed your everlasting life. Where are the words which you did speak before this happened? Where is your desire for martyrdom?" The brother said, "I have sinned in all these respects, O father, and I am no longer able to lift up my face to heaven. I am lost, O father, I have no position to contemplate what I shall do, O father. I never expected that the matter would happen thus."

Having said these words with tears, the Abba spoke to him, saying, "You, O wretched man, had made yourself an alien to the Lord. But the Lord is good, and never keeps His anger for a testimony. He is a lover of mercy, and is able to sink our sins in the depths of the sea. As far as are the heavens from the earth so far He had put away our iniquity and sins. For He does not desire the death of the sinner, but his repentance, and He does not wish that a man who

has fallen should remain in his fallen condition, but that he should rise up. He does not desire that he who has turned back should keep far off from Him, but to return quickly to Him. Therefore do not despair. There is still a hope of your redemption. For it is said, "If you cut down a tree it shall renew itself." If then you wish to obey me in everything I say to you, you shall obtain forgiveness from God." With tears the brother said, "From this time forward I will obey you in everything, O father." The Abba commanded him to seclude himself in a cell alone, and never to hold converse with any man until death. The Abba also commanded him to eat one meal of bread and salt only daily, to drink water only for the whole period of his life, to plait two palm leaf mats daily, to keep vigil as long as possible, and never to cease from crying. The brother departed, as the blessed man commanded him. He carried out everything as he had been told. He held no conversation with any man except with the Abba, with Theodore, and with a few of the other great sages. The brother spent ten years striving in this manner. He passed away in the grace of the Lord. The Abba bore witness nobly concerning his tranquil state.

14. Of the Phantom which they Saw by Night

ONCE WHEN THE ABBA, AND THEODORE WHOM HE LOVED, were walking through the monastery at night, they saw suddenly a great phantom full of the deepest deceit. It was in the form of a woman, whose beauty was indescribable, a character that no man was able to tell the beauty, or the form, or the appearance, which belonged to that phantom. Even Theodore, who looked at that phantom, was exceedingly perturbed, and his face changed colour. When the blessed man saw that Theodore was afraid, he said to him, "Be of good cheer in the Lord, O Theodore, and do not fear." The holy man, after saying these things, commanded him to pray with him so that the phantom, which was striking wonder into them, might be driven away. As they were praying, the phantom came nearer and took a solid form. When it, and the company of devils with it, drew near, it came forward, saying to them, "Why do you labor in vain? You are unable at this present to do anything against me. I have received power from God, Who sustains the universe, to tempt whoever I please. I have abundance of time to do this, for this I have asked from God."

Pachomius asked the phantom, saying, "Where do you come from? Whom do you wish to tempt?" The phantom answered and said, "I am the daughter of the Calumniator. His great power cannot be described. To me the

whole company of the devils is subject. I brought down the holy stars to the earth. I snatched the apostolic power from Judas. I have received authority and power to make war against you, O Pachomius. I am not able to endure the reproach of the devils. No man had made me as weak as you. You have made me trampled by foot of youths, old men, and young men. You have gathered together against me a congregation such as you had. You have set for them as a wall, which shall never fall, the fear of God, so that my ministers are not able to approach with boldness and freedom anyone of you. All these things have happened to me because of the Word of God Who was made Man, it is He Who has given you power to trample all our might, and to hold us in derision."

The holy man Pachomius asked the phantom, "Have you come to tempt me alone according to what you've said?" The phantom replied, "I have come to tempt you, and all those who are like you." Pachomius said to the phantom, "So will you tempt Theodore also?" The phantom said, "I have received power over you, and over Theodore. But I am never able to come near you." Then Pachomius asked the phantom, "Why?" The phantom replied, "If I were to make war with you two, you would have an occasion for help and not for injury, and especially in your case, O Pachomius, as the eyes of your body are worthy to be a spectator of the glory of God. You will not live forever for those for who, at present, you make yourselves a wall through your prayers, and whom you help. The time will come after your death when I shall have dominion over those whom you are now protecting against me. You have made me to be trodden under foot by this multitude of monks."

The Abba said to the phantom, "How do you know that those who come after us will not serve the Lord more truly than we do, or that they will not be able to confirm and strengthen those who come after us in the fear of God more than we do?" The phantom replied, "I do know this." The Abba said to the phantom, "You are lying, by your wicked head, because you have no knowledge beforehand of the things which are going to take place. For to God alone belongs fore-knowledge. You are then the chief of falsehood." The phantom answered, saying, "True, I have no fore-knowledge of anything. As you say, it belongs to God alone to know events beforehand. I told you that I had knowledge because I judged by analogy." The blessed man said to the phantom, "How can you judge by analogy?" The phantom replied, "By the things that have already taken place I am able to judge of what will take place in the future." The Abba replied, "How?" The phantom explained, "I know that the beginning of every matter is love and knowledge. It receives confirmation from the things, which are provided, and especially through the

divine care and the calling of heaven. By the Will of God it becomes confirmed by wonderful things and signs. It is confirmed also by various powers that are exercised in them. When that beginning becomes old and grey, it falls away from growth. When growth had fallen away, it perishes of old age, or languishes through sickness, or decays through neglect.”

Afterwards the Abba asked the phantom, “Why had you come, according as you say, to tempt these great saints and not all the brethren? If it be as you say, the destruction of souls rests with you to work, and you surpass in power all the devils, and you must have all this power so that you might be able to strive against men like these.” The phantom answered him saying, “I have already told you that when the strength of the Sustainer of creation, the Redeemer Christ, appeared upon the earth, we were brought so low that, like a sparrow, we were mocked and laughed at by men who are clothed with the Spirit, and who seek to learn the Lord. Although we have become feeble through Him, we do not cease to work as much as we possibly can against you. We never cease from opposing you by every means in our power. We sow the seed of our wickedness near the soul of him who strives with us. This we do especially when we see that he receives it, and if we see that he really permits us to embrace him. We then inflame him with fierce lusts, and encompass him like mighty ones and cruel devils who are exceedingly difficult to defeat. But if he is not willing to receive our seed, and will not, through his faith in God, and the watchfulness of his mind, accept with pleasure the things, which are offered to him by us, we dissolve away even as smoke is dissipated in the air. This is the reason why I am not permitted to wage war with all the monks. I do not do so because not all possess perfection. For if it were permitted to me to wage war against them all, I should be enabled to lead astray many of those who lean upon you.”

The blessed man said to the phantom, “Curse upon your wickedness which never sleeps! You will never cease to stir yourselves up against the race of the children of men until the divine and unpolluted grace of God descends from heaven and destroys you.” After saying these things, the Abba commanded the phantom to depart to the place where it had been commanded to go, and never to approach this monastery again. When the morning was come, he called all the great brethren, and related to them all the things, which he had seen and heard from the destroying devils. To the other brethren in the other great monasteries he sent letters, to inform them, in the fear of God, by means of these concerning the vision which he had seen.

15a. Of the Gift of Tongues which Pachomius Received

THE BLESSED PACHOMIUS WAS ONCE VISITING the brethren in their cells, and was correcting the thoughts of each of them. He was obliged to visit a certain Roman, who was a high rank nobleman. He knew the Greek language very well. Having come to this great man, so that he might exhort him with words, which would be beneficial to him, and might learn the motions of his heart, the blessed man spoke to him in the Egyptian tongue. The brother did not understand. Because the blessed man did not know how to speak Greek, the Abba was obliged to call another brother who was able to interpret the things, which were said by both. When the brother came to interpret, the Greek did not wish to declare to the Abba, through interpreters, the defects of his heart. He spoke to him thus, "After God, I wish you, and you alone, to know the wickedness of my heart. I do not desire to declare them to you through others, for I do not wish any man except you to hear them."

When the Abba heard these words, he commanded the interpreting brother to depart. Because the Abba was unable to speak to the Greek brother the words about help and redemption, he made a sign to him with his hand to remain until he came back to him. The Abba left him, went to pray by himself, stretched out his hands towards heaven, and prayed to God, saying, "O Lord, You Mighty One, Who sustains the universe. If I am unable to benefit the children of men whom You do send to me from the ends of the earth, because I am not acquainted with their languages, what need is there for them to come? But if You wish them to be saved here through me, give me, O Lord, You the Star of all creation, the power to know their languages so that I may be able to set their souls in the straight way."

When he prayed for more than three hours entreating God to grant him this knowledge, there was sent from heaven into his right hand something, which was like a letter written on paper. When he read it, he learned immediately how to speak all tongues. He sent up the praise to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. He came with great joy to that brother, and began to talk to him both Greek and Latin with such fluency. When the brother heard him, he says that the Abba's skill in speaking Greek surpassed all the learned men of the day. The Abba corrected him, as was right, appointed to him the penance which was suitable to his defects, committed him to the Lord, and went forth from him.

15b. The History of Jonah (Yawnan) the Gardener

IT HAPPENED ON THE MORROW THAT THE BLESSED MAN departed to visit the other monasteries. He arrived at a monastery called Demeskenyanos, and entered it. There was in that monastery a fine, large fig tree. One of the youths was used to climbing up secretly, plucking its fruit and eating it. When the Abba had gone in, and drawn near that fig tree, he saw an unclean spirit sitting in it. He knew immediately that it was the devil of the love of the belly. The holy man, knowing that it was the devil who led astray the youths, called the gardener, and said to him, "Brother, cut down this fig tree, for it is a stumbling block to those who do not possess a well-established mind. It is not a seemly thing for this tree to be in the middle of the monastery."

When the gardener, called Yawnan, heard these words, he was sorely grieved, for he had passed eighty five years in the monastery, and lived a pure and honourable life. By himself he cared for all the fruit trees therein. He planted all the trees that were in the monastery garden. Until the day of his death he never tasted any of the fruit whatsoever, though all the brethren, the strangers, and those who dwelt round them used to eat to their fill in the fruit season. This brother dressed in this fashion: he joined three skins of goats together to form a covering for his body. This cover was sufficient clothing for him. He did not lay down for himself one kind of bed in the winter season, and another in the time of summer. He did not know rest of the body, because of the press of his labors. With a ready mind, he toiled always. He never ate any cooked food, neither did he partake of lentil or of any other food of the same kind. He lived all the years of his life on planting only, which he ate with vinegar. The brethren used to regard him positively, saying that he did not even know where the hospital was, and that still less knowing what the sick folk ate.

Besides all these things, he never lay upon his back until the day of his death. He worked all day in the garden. Towards sunset he used to take his food into his cell, and sitting upon a chair in the midst of it. He would plait ropes until the time for the recital of the service of the night. In this way it might happen that he was able to snatch a little sleep through the absolute need of his corporeal nature. He slept while he was plaiting the ropes in his hands. He did not plait these ropes by the light of a lamp, but while sitting in darkness and reciting the Scriptures. He had only one garment of linen, which he used to put on before partaking of the Holy and Divine Sacraments of Christ. Immediately when he had done this he would take it off and lay it aside, so that it stays clean. This garment lasted him eighty-five years. That

blessed old man performed much works deserving praise. We have not set them down in the book of this history, lest our discourse might become either too long or too full for those faithful ones who believe, and we should cause those who read it to become weary.

We found out concerning this man of whom we have written these things when he was dead. He passed away in an unusual manner. He was sitting upon a chair, and plaiting ropes, according to his custom. The ropes were found in his hands at the time of his death. This blessed man did not die suddenly, and so lose any portion of the happiness, which was due to his health. He fell ill, like all other men, and would not be persuaded to go to a hospital. He did not wish to be ministered to by any man, like other sick men. He did not want to eat any meat that the sick brethren wanted to eat. He would not lie on his back even when he was sick. He would not permit anyone to place a cushion for him while sitting up, or anything a little soft that might afford him relief. No man was standing by him when he passed away. He went to his rest grasping his rope work in his hands. It was, moreover, a wonderful thing to hear how they buried him. It was impossible to stretch out his legs, because they had become stiff like logs of wood. It was also impossible to make one hand lie by the side of his body. It was impossible to strip off him the skin garment that clothed him. We were therefore obliged to roll him up in cloth like a bundle and to bury him in that state.

The blessed Pachomius came and told this man to cut down this fig tree. When Yawnan heard this, he said to the Abba, "No, O father, for we are accustomed to gather a large crop of fruit from this fig tree for the brethren." Although the Abba was greatly grieved over this matter, he did not wish to urge the old gardener any further. He was the more grieved as he knew that Yawnan lived great and marvelous life. Yawnan was also held to be wonderful by others. It came to pass on the following day that the fig tree had become withered so completely that not a single leaf or fruit was found on it. When the blessed man saw these things, he was greatly grieved, not for the sake of the fig tree, but because of his own disobedience, for when the Abba told him to cut it down, he did not act according to his word.

16. Pachomius and the Buildings

THE BLESSED MAN PACHOMIUS BUILT AN ORATORY in his monastery, made its pillars for it, and covered the faces of the walls with tiles. He furnished it beautifully, and was exceedingly pleased with the work. When he had come

to himself he declared, through the agency of Satan, that the beauty of the oratory was a thing which would compel a man to admire it, and that the building would then be praised. Suddenly he rose up, took ropes, fastened them round the pillars, made a prayer within himself, and commanded the brethren to help him. They bowed their bodies, so the pillars and the whole construction fell to the ground. He said to the brethren, "Take heed lest you strive to ornament the work of your hands over much. Take the greatest possible care that the grace of God and His gift may be in the work of each one of you, so that the mind may not stumble towards the praises of cunning wickedness, and the Calumniator may not obtain his prey."

17. Of when the Heretics Came to Pachomius

IT HAPPENED THAT ON A CERTAIN OCCASION, some heretical monks, who were habitually wearing garments made of hair, had heard concerning the blessed Pachomius. They rose up and came to his monastery. They said to some monks of the Abba, "Our father has sent us to your Abba with a message, saying, 'If you are in truth a man of God, and if you are confident that God will listen to you, come here, and let us walk together across the river on our feet, so that every man may know who of us has more freedom of speech before God than the other.'" When the brethren informed the Abba concerning these things, he was exceedingly angry with them, and said to them, "Why did you undertake to listen to those who have said these things? Do you not know that requests of this kind are things that are foreign to God, and are wholly alien to our rule? Besides this, they are not even things that are thought well of by men who live in the world. For what law that God teaches us to do these things? Moreover, our Redeemer commands us to the contrary in the Holy Gospel, saying, 'Let not your left hand know what your right hand does.' For you think of something that is more wretched than the want of mind (i.e. foolishness) in imagining that I should give up mourning for my sins, or cease to think how I may flee from everlasting punishment, or that, even if I were a boy in my thoughts I could ever come to make such a demand as that."

The brethren answered and said to him, "How is it then that this man, who is a heretic and alien to God, should be so bold as to call upon you to do this thing?" The Abba answered them, saying, "He is able to pass over the river as one who travels over dry land through the neglect of God, and the Calumniator helps him, so that his wicked heresy may not be brought to nothing, and so that the faith of those who have gone astray may be more

finally established by means of works of audacity which he performs through him. Get out then, and say to those messengers the following, 'Thus says the man of God, Pachomius, 'I devote all my strivings, and all my anxious care, not that I may pass over the river by walking on the waters, but in trying to flee from the judgement of God, and to escape, by the might of the Lord, from such Satanic wiles as these.'"' Then having said these things to the brethren he strictly forbade them to think greatly of their integrity, or to lust after the sight of him walking across the river on the water, or to go with those who pry into such matters as these. He said "We must not voluntarily follow after such matters as these. We must not put God to the test by such questions, for concerning the knowledge of events before they happen He has commanded us by His Holy Scriptures, saying, 'You shall not tempt the Lord Your God, says the Lord.'

18. Of the Question which a Certain Brother

THE ABBA WAS ONCE ASKED BY A CERTAIN BROTHER, "Why is it that, before the coming of that devil who vexes us, we possess the understanding of the mind in a healthy state, and are able to make use of philosophy for the sake of self-denial, humility, and the other virtues. But when it comes to us to make manifest the virtues of philosophy, that is to say, long suffering in the hour of wrath, the keeping of the temper in the season of anger, a frame of mind from which vainglory is absent, when there are praises ascribed to us, and many other things which are akin to these, the mind languishes and becomes destroyed?"

The Abba answered, saying, "It is because we are not perfectly skilled in the performance of these things, and because we are not so thoroughly acquainted with all the mind and vague thoughts of the devils. We are able, through the power of the sight of the soul, to recognize in quiet contemplation the advent of him who causes us vexation, and who watches that he may be able to gather together the outpouring of such thoughts. Therefore, everyday and every hour it is the portion (rather the duty) of the soul to watch. We must pour out on it, like oil, the fear of God, the efficacious performance of work, and the lamp, which will enable us to see the things falling on us in the healing of the mind. Whoever then will not be strenuous will come to anger, wrath, ill temper, and to each of the passions that lead us on to wickedness. The soul will see, and depart to that incorporeal country. It will make the mind to hold in contempt the things that are wrought by the devils. The mind will compel it to trample

under foot serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy.”

19. The History of a Vainglorious Monk

ON ONE OCCASION WHEN THE ABBA WAS SITTING with a number of the other brethren in a certain place in the monastery, he was told that one of the monks in the monastery used to make two mats of plaited palm leaves daily. That day he placed them in front of his cell, opposite the place where the Abba was then sitting with the brethren. He did this because he was unduly exalted with the thought of vainglory. He believed that he would be praised for such assiduity, because the rule of the fathers was that each monk should make one mat daily. The Abba perceived that the monk did this for the purpose of making a display, and understood the intention, which was stirring in the man and moving him. The Abba sighed heavily and said to the brethren who were sitting with him, “See this man who toils from morning to evening? He has endowed Satan with all his labor, he has left nothing of his work for the comfort of his own soul. He has toiled much for the praise of the children of men, and has not worn out his body with all this work for the sake of God. His soul is empty of work through the pleasure of him that does it, for he has loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”

The Abba called that brother, rebuked him, and charged him to stand up behind the brethren when they were praying. The Abba asked him to hold the two mats and to say to them, “O my brethren, I beseech you to pray for my degraded soul, in order that through your prayers God may show abundant mercy to it, for I have held these mats in greater honour than His kingdom.” He also commanded that the man should stand up with the mats among the brethren when they were sitting at meals until they rose up from the table. He commanded likewise that after this he should be confined to his cell for a period of five months. He was obliged to make two mats daily, to eat bread and salt only, and that no man should visit him.

20. Of a Certain Monk who Belonged to the Monastery

BEFORE WE BRING THIS HISTORY TO A CLOSE, we are obliged to mention another holy monk who was thoroughly trained in the spiritual excellence of the brethren. We aim to narrate a few of the things, which were done by him for edification. This brother, of blessed memory, because he was afflicted in his

body had a cell separate from the brethren. He lived upon bread and salt only. He used to make one mat of plaited palm leaves each day. It would happen often, when he was plaiting the ropes, which were being used in making the mats, that his hands would become covered with blood, and become so full of wounds caused by the reeds. The very mat, which he was making were wet with blood. But although he suffered from such a weakness as this, he never turned away from the congregation of the brethren, and never lay down to sleep in the daytime until the end of his life. It was his habit every night before he lay down to sleep to repeat some portion of the Scriptures, and then he would go to sleep until they beat the board to summon the congregation to the service of the night.

On one occasion a certain brother went to him. Seeing that his hands were covered with blood through plaiting mats, he said to him, "Why do you work and toil in this manner, seeing that you are so seriously ill? Do you think that you would not obtain permission not to work and to be idle from God? God knows that you are sick, and no man who has your condition has ever worked. We feed and take care of strangers and poor folk. Are we not in duty bound to minister to your wants, you who are one of us, and are so holy, with all our soul and with the greatest joy and gladness?" The monk said to him, "It is impossible for me not to work." The brother replied, "If it pleases you to act thus, at least anoint your hands with oil in the evening, for you will not become as weary as you are now, and you will not become covered with blood." The monk listened to that brother, anointed his hands with oil, even as he had told him to do, yet because they were tender they were grievously chafed, cut, and torn by the sharp reeds. The Abba himself went to visit him in his cell, and he said to him, "Do you think, O Theodore, that the oil had any beneficial effect upon you? Who forced you to work? Did not you place your hope of being healed rather upon the operation of the oil than upon God? Do you think your God was not able to heal you? Yet when He saw that you were ordering help for yourself He left you to fall into this pain." The monk answered and said to the Abba, "O father, I have sinned against God, and I confess, and entreat you that God may forgive me this sin."

According to what those fathers who were with him said, he passed a full year in mourning for this act of folly. He ate once every two days. At the beginning of the period this man began to gain strength considerably, the Abba was in the habit of sending him to every monastery that he might be both the foundation and the type of all the brethren, because he endured the cruel weakness of that disease with such patience.

Here ends the history of the followers of Pachomius, which is all in Greek

“the Asketikon” of the followers of Pachomius.

Further Remarks by the Writer Palladius

THEREFORE, THOUGH I MUST HERE ADD A FEW REMARKS about my beloved brother, who had lived with me from my youth up until this day, I will make an end to my discourse in the haven of silence. It is indeed a very long time since I first knew this man, who is worthy of blessings; and I never knew him either to eat or to fast with desire; and, in my opinion, he overcame also the lust for possessions, and especially the passion for empty praise, and that which was his own was sufficient for him. He never arrayed himself in fine and costly apparel, but being made contemptible he received acts of grace, and in return for God’s true mercy he continued thus even until death. This man accepted the temptation of devils a thousand times when they rose up against him. At length, one day a certain devil pressed him, and said to him, “Agree with me for one day only, and commit sin only once. Any woman that you shall mention in this world I will bring to you.” On another occasion that devil strove with him for fourteen nights, even as he himself told me, and he used to kick him with his feet in the night season, saying to him, “Do not worship Christ, and I will never come near you again.” He answered, saying, “It is for this very reason that I worship Him, I confess Him and glorify Him ten thousand times because you are vexed by it. You reel away and tremble before Him.”

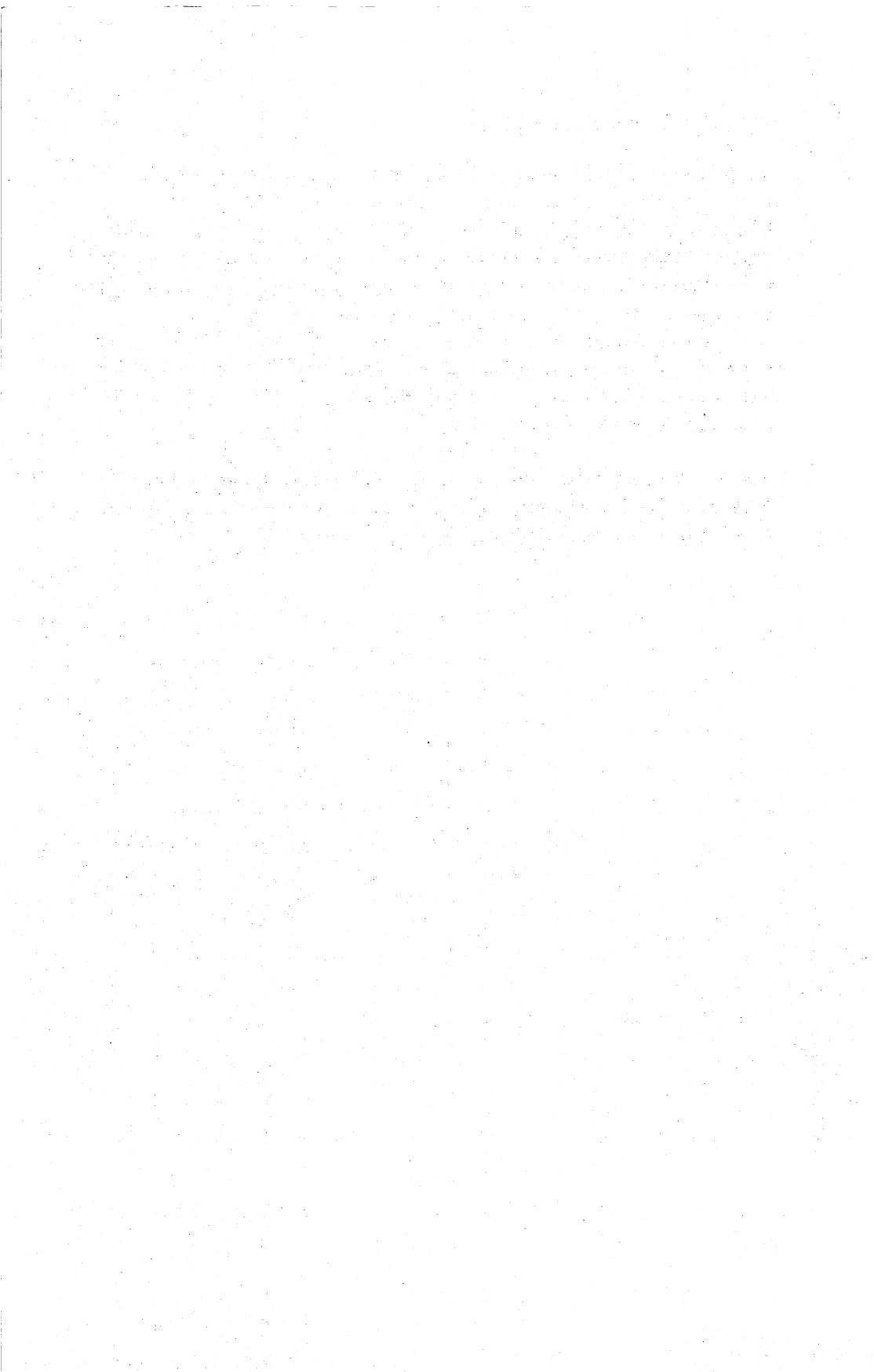
In his coming in and going out he walked through one hundred and six cities several times, and in the greater number of them he stayed for some time. By the grace and mercy of Christ, he never knew the temptation of a woman, not even in a dream, except in his warfare against fornication. I know that he received food from an angel three times. One day he was in a parched desert, and did not have on him a morsel of bread, and he found three cakes of bread in his cloak. Another time, when he lacked food, an angel appeared to him in a vision, saying to him, “Go and take wheat and oil from such and such a man.” From there came to him the man from whom the angel had commanded him to take wheat and oil, and said to him, “Are you such and such a man?” He said to him, “Yes, I am.” The man said, “A certain one had told you to take thirty bushels of wheat from me, and twelve boxes of oil.”

Over a matter of this kind, for such was his nature, he would boast. I know that on occasions he used to weep over people who were in danger, difficulties, and were living in poverty. He would give them whatever he possessed, with

the exception of his body, which he was unable to give. I have seen him very many times weeping over a man who had been caught in a snare, and had fallen into sin. Through his tears he made him penitent, and repentant of his sin. This brother swore to me once, saying, "I made supplication to God that I would never make myself pleasing to any man, especially the rich folk of the world, and the liars, lest they might give me whatever I had need of."

It is sufficient for me that I have been held worthy to set down completely in writing, and to make mention of the man. This man, by the grace of God, was able to make perfect all these things. Behold the summary of the contents of the book have been written above.

Here ends the Second Book of the histories of the holy fathers, which were compiled by the blessed Bishop Palladius, and dedicated to Lausus the Prefect. Glory be the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, forever! Amen.



BOOK II - PART THREE

*The History of the Monks Compiled by
Hieronymus*

Moreover, in the might of and with confidence in Christ, we begin to write the histories of the solitary monks who lived in the Deserts of Egypt. These histories were composed by the blessed Hieronymus (Died A.D. 420)

1. The Apology

BLESSED BE GOD WHO DESIRES the welfare of all the children of men, Who wishes that they may live and come to the knowledge of the truth, Who has led us also into Egypt, and has showed us the great and marvelous things which are worthy to be remembered at all times, and to be written down in a book. Who also has given us the cause of our salvation and of every one who wishes to be helped further, and Who has given to us a demonstration of the good life and the doctrine which is able to rouse up the soul to the excellent rule of the ascetic life.

I am not worthy to begin this history, for inferior men are not capable of approaching the histories of great men, since they are unable to narrate them as they really are, and still less are they able to set them down in writing in a book. Inferior men ought not to be so bold as to attempt to explain matters that are difficult in meaning and awkward in words. It must appear to be a great presumption that will bring danger in its train, for incapable men to undertake such things, and to be so bold as to write in a book the sublime histories. But inasmuch as I have been requested, earnestly and frequently, on several occasions, by the brotherhood of blessed men who have their habitation in the Mount of Olives, to write an account of the lives and deeds of the blessed men, and of the solitary dwellers who were in Egypt, according to what I myself have seen of their abundant love, and their patient endurance, and their vexatious toil for God's sake, I have then put my trust in their prayers, and have been so bold as to narrate the following history, and to set it down in writing, so that I myself may gain a fair and abundant reward, and so that those who listen to the same may find benefit, and may emulate such beautiful deeds, and may depart from the world in a state of perfection, and may enjoy peace and rest through the excellent long-suffering of their toil. For in truth I have observed and seen the treasure of Christ that is hidden under human garments, and I have not buried it for the advantage of many, but have brought it forward that it may be for the good of every one. I am sure that for me to give this benefit to the blessed brethren will be noble merchandise for me, for they will pray for the redemption of my soul.

At the beginning of this book then I make mention first of all of the coming of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, by Whose doctrine the blessed and holy brethren who are in Egypt are led, for I have seen many fathers there who were living the lives of angels, and were fashioning their lives into the similitude of that of the Redeemer. I have also seen others, who were young men, and who were like to the Prophets; and they did work which was divine and marvelous, they were men who were indeed servants of Christ, and they had no care of this earth and nothing belonging to time vexed their minds. Assuredly these men, although they appeared to be living upon the earth, had their habitation in heaven; for some of them were not even conscious that it was the world that they lived, and did not even know that there was wickedness committed in the world. Assuredly it was with them even as it is written in the Psalm, 'Great is the peace of those who love Your law' Again it is written, 'I will be to them a Father, and they shall be to Me sons and daughters, says the Lord,' the Star of all creation.

Moreover, many of them when they heard of what was spoken in the world

found it to be strange to them, and all the good things and all the cares of this world were forgotten by them; for a man saw them sown in the desert, and they were, like true sons, expecting their father Christ, and like husbandmen of the truth and honorable servants they waited for Christ their companion. They did not have care, neither for houses, nor for meats or raiment, for the coming of Christ, their hope, was the one thing for which their thoughts waited. Therefore, whenever any of them lacked the things which were necessary, they sought neither city, nor village, nor brother, nor friend, nor parents, nor children, nor servants that the things which they lacked might be supplied by them, but their desire and their faith were sufficient for them, and they only needed to spread out their hand in supplication, and to offer up the confession of their lips to God, and immediately when their prayers were ended everything they needed was found before them. Why is it necessary to speak at length concerning their faith in Christ, which was able to remove mountains? More Saint Jerome's over, many of them restrained fountains and streams of running water, and walked upon the floods of the river Nile, and destroyed serpents, and worked cures, and wonders, and mighty deeds, even like to those of the holy Prophets, and the blessed Apostles, by the might of their Lord. It is a well known and evident thing to every inhabitant of that country that the world stands through their prayers, and that through them the life of the children of men is held to be precious by God.

I have also seen in Egypt a numerous nation of monks who could neither be denned nor counted, and among them were men of every sort and condition, and they lived both in the desert and in the villages, and no earthly king has ever been able to gather together so great a number of men into his service; for there is neither village nor city in Egypt or in the Thebaid which is not surrounded by monasteries as by walls, and many multitudes of people rest upon their prayers as they do upon God. Some of the monks live quite close to the towns and villages, in caves and on the waste land, and many of them afar off, and they all in every place make manifest their labor in a marvelous manner as if they were envious of each other. The object of the zeal of those who live afar off is that none of their fellows shall surpass them in the labors of the fear of God, and the greatest anxiety of those who live near is to vanquish by their life and deeds those who lived at a distance and are famous, even though the things of evil (or wickedness) vex them from every place. Therefore, as one who has obtained great benefit from them, and as one who has examined carefully the labors of their life and deeds, whereby I have also obtained benefit, I now approach this history with the view of making the successful monks more zealous by the memorials which I hand

on to them, and for the edification and profit of those who are beginning to emulate strenuously their rules of life. First of all then, by the grace of God, I will write at the beginning of this history the narratives of the lives and deeds of the great and holy fathers, by whose hands our Lord has fashioned at this present time the same kind of things as he fashioned by the hands of His Prophets and Apostles; for it is our Lord Himself, Who then, as now, worked, as He still works, everything in every man.

2. The History of Saint John of Lycus

I SAW THEN ON THE BORDERS OF THE CITY OF LYCUS, in the Thebaid, the great and blessed man John, a man who was truly holy and excellent, and by his works it was known to every man that he possessed the gift of prophecy. He made known to the believing Emperor Theodosius, before they took place, the things which God was about to do to the children of men, and he revealed to him what manner of ending they would take, and the arrogance of the kings who would rise up against him, and how they would speedily be destroyed, and how the nations which would gather together to make war upon him would perish. His ability to read the future was so great that even a general came to enquire of him, if he should be able to conquer the Kushaye peoples (i.e. the Nubians), who at that time had boldly invaded Syene, which is the beginning of the Thebaid, and who had overrun the city and laid it waste. The blessed John said to him, "You shall go up against them, shall overtake them, shall conquer them, and shall be victorious before the Emperor." These things had actually taken place. This blessed man possessed the power of prophecy to an extraordinary degree, according to what I have heard from the fathers who were constantly with him, and as the lives of these men were well known to the inhabitants of that country, and were carefully scrutinized by them, it is impossible to think that their stories about him were in any way hypocritical; on the contrary, their language was incapable of describing his honorable life and deeds.

HIS MIRACULOUS WORKS

There was a certain tribune who came to him, and who begged and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him. She was exceedingly anxious to see him. Before going up the river to the district of Syene, she went up wishing to see him, that he might offer up prayer on her behalf, bless her, and then to send

her away on her journey. The blessed man had taken a vow not to see women. He was ninety years of age and had been in a cave for forty years. He had lived there the whole time, and never departed from it. He never allowed any man to come into his abode. He excused himself from seeing the noble lady. He was in the habit of saluting folk through his window only. He spoke to those who came for blessing through his window. He only spoke with every man concerning the necessary care to take in the matter of the life and works of ascetic excellence. The tribune multiplied greatly his supplications and entreated him to allow his wife to come to him. The dwelling of the blessed man was situated in the mountainous desert about five miles from the city. The holy man would not be persuaded to do so, but said, "This thing is impossible." He dismissed the tribune in grief and in sorrow. The woman tormented her husband by day and by night, and took an oath, saying, "I cannot go to any other place until I have seen the holy prophet." When the oaths of the woman were revealed to the blessed man by her husband, he discerned the faith of the woman, and said to her husband, "I will appear to her in a dream this night, but she must never try in addition to see my face in the body." The tribune informed his wife of the words. As she was lying in her bed at night she saw the prophet himself coming to her, saying, "What have I to do with you, O woman? Why do you so eagerly desire to see my face? Am I a prophet or a righteous man? I am a sinner and a man of passions even as you are. Behold, I have prayed for you, for your husband, and for your dwelling, that even as you have believed, so may it be to you. Therefore go in peace." Having said these words he departed from her. When the woman woke up she related to her husband the words of the prophet and described his form and appearance. She offered her thanks to the prophet through her husband. When the holy man John saw that her husband had come, he said to him, "Behold, your request is completed. I have seen your wife. I have fulfilled her petition. You must never see my face again; but depart in peace."

The wife of another prefect was with child, and was near to her time for bringing forth. Her husband was away at a distance. On the day in which the blessed man John met her husband she was afflicted to death, with pains of her delivery. The holy man John gave the news to her husband, saying, "If you did only know the grace of God, for behold, a son had been born to you this day. You would praise God, for his mother had suffered in no small degree. Behold, you shall go and shall find the boy to be seven days old on your arrival. You shall give him the name of John. When he has grown up, been instructed, and is seven years of age, you shall send him to the solitary monks in the desert."

The blessed John also made manifest wonderful things like these to stranger

folk who used to come to him. Frequently, he made known to the people of the city who used to come to him beforehand concerning their affairs. He showed them the things that were about to happen. He told each one of them what had each done in secret. He foretold concerning the rise of the Nile, and the good crop that would result accordingly. He described the crop to them and declared the time when the anger of God was about to come on them. He rebuked those who were the cause of the God's anger. The blessed man John did not himself work his cures openly, but used to consecrate the oil and give it to those who were afflicted, and they were healed. The wife of a certain nobleman had the light of her eyes taken away through the cataract. She begged and entreated her husband to take her to him. When he said to her the blessed man had never met a woman, she besought him to send a message to the holy man asking him to offer up a prayer on her behalf. The blessed man sent her some oil over which he had said a blessing and made the sign of the Cross. She smeared her eyes with the oil three times and after three days she was able to see. She praised God the Lord of all, and gave thanks to Him always.

What shall we say about his other deeds? Nothing. We can only tell of the things that we saw with our own eyes. There were of us seven brethren who were strangers, and went to him together. Having given us the salutation of peace with his glorious face, and shown his gladness at seeing us to each one of us, we asked him before anything else to offer up a prayer on our behalf, for it is the custom with all our fathers in Egypt to do this. He asked me if there was, perchance, a man among us who was a priest or deacon. Although we said there was none among us, he well knew that there was one among us who was hiding his honorable rank. There was among us one who received the hand of deaconship. Only one of the brethren who were with us knew of this. The deacon, by reason of his humility, prohibited him from making this known to anyone. He said, "In comparison with these holy men, I am not worthy to be even called a Christian. Do not then permit me to make use of the honor of deaconship." The blessed man pointed out to us all with his hand the deacon, saying, "This brother is a deacon." The deacon denied this repeatedly, thinking to lead us astray. The blessed man grasped the hand of the deacon through the window, kissed it, begging and rebuking him at the same time, saying, "Do not wrong the grace of God, O my son. Do not lie concerning the gift of Christ with its denial. Falsehood, whether uttered concerning a small matter or a great one, or for convenience, is still falsehood. Falsehood is not to be praised. For our Redeemer said, 'All falsehood is of the Evil One.' " The deacon being thus rebuked accepted the reproof of the old man pleasantly.

When we had prayed and ended our supplications, one of us became afflicted with shivering and strong fever. He begged the blessed John that he might be healed. The blessed man said to him, "This sickness is for your benefit, because a diminution of faith had come upon you." He gave him some oil, and let him anoint himself with it. When the man rubbed the oil on his body, every evil thing that was inside him he cast out through his mouth. He was completely cured of his sickness, and departed on his own feet with us to the place where travelers rested.

A MAN OF TEACHING

The blessed man appeared to be about ninety years old. His whole body was emaciated and frail as if by the severity of his rule of life. No hair remained on his cheeks. He ate nothing except dried vegetables (or fruits). In the period of his old age he ate at sunset. He suffered severely in his early monkhood life because he would neither eat bread, nor anything cooked by fire. He commanded us, and we sat down with him, giving thanks to God that we were esteemed worthy to see him. He rejoiced in us as if we had been beloved children of his who were meeting their father after a long absence. With a joyful countenance he conversed with us, saying, "Where do you come from, my sons, and from what country? You have come to a miserable and wretched man." We told him, "The country where we had come from, Jerusalem, for the benefit of our souls, and that, that which we had received with our ears we might see with our own eyes. The hearing of the ears is less trustworthy than the sight of the eyes, and frequently error makes its way into what is heard by the ears, while the remembrance of what a man had seen can never be blotted out from the heart. The description of the same will be permanently fixed in the mind."

The blessed man John answered us, saying, "What great thing did you think you would see, O beloved sons, that you have come all this way, and have toiled all this great toil? Did you desire to come and see a miserable and wretched man? We possess nothing worth of looking or wondering at. There are, however, men in every place, who are wonderful and worthy of admiration. There are men who are called in the church the Prophets and Apostles of God. It is necessary that we should emulate their example. But I marvel greatly at the indefatigable zeal, which made you undertake the tribulations of the journey with contempt in order that you might come here for your welfare. There are men who, because of their sluggishness, are unwilling to go out of their caves. I say that, although what you have now done merits praise, you

must not allow the thought to come into your minds that you have fulfilled every duty completely. You must make yourselves like your fathers in respect of the glorious rules of life by which they were guided and the works which they did. For although you possess all the virtues, which is a difficult matter to accomplish, you must not even so be over confident in yourselves. The men who have become puffed up with pride, and thought they had arrived at the stage of being worthy of praise, have subsequently fallen from their high estate. Examine yourselves carefully and see whether your consciences are pure. May that purity not be driven out from your minds. Do not let your thoughts wander about at the season when you stand up in prayer before God. Do not let any other thought enter into your mind but turn it away from that glorious sight of God which rises on the pure heart at the season of prayer, and enlightens the understanding to shine. Do not let the remembrance of evil thoughts disturb your minds. Examine yourselves and see whether you have truly made a covenant with God. Examine whether you have not entered in that you may attain the freedom which is in Christ, whether you do not desire to possess the vainglory of ascetic deeds, and whether you do not, after the manner of men who boast themselves before men, possess only the similitude of our ascetic deeds. Take heed lest you have any passion, any longing for honor or glory from the children of men, any deceitful desire of priesthood, or any self love. Do not think that you are righteous men only, but be diligent and zealous in very truth that you may neither be boastful nor unduly exalted by applause.

Do not let there be any anxiety about family in the mind of him who prays to God in truth, neither shall there be to him any remembrance of the fair things that he has done, nor love for other folk, nor memory of the world. If the man reduces his conversation with his Lord, or is drawn aside, or led away by any other mind than this, his labor is emptiness. This falling away happens to the mind of man when he does not deny the world absolutely, and when he hunts after the admiration of the children of men. For he devotes himself to everything in a multitudes of ways, and his mind is divided among many kinds of thoughts, both of the body and of the earth. He thereupon is obliged to strive against his own passions and is not able to see God. It is therefore not seemly for a man to think that he had found knowledge with absolute certainty, lest being unworthy of knowledge, and having only acquired a small portion thereof, he imagines that he has found the whole of it, and so he devotes himself wholly to destruction. But it is right that we should always draw near to God with moderate ideas and in faith, so far as it is possible to approach Him in the mind, and so far as the children of men are able to

attain to Him. It is right therefore that the mind of every man who loves God should be remote from all these things, for he, who truthfully seeks after God with all his heart, will remove his mind far away from every earthly thing, and will direct the gaze of his understanding towards God. It is written, 'Turn and know that I, even I, am God.' He therefore who is worthy of a little of the knowledge of God is a man who is not able to receive the whole of it. He is able to acquire the knowledge of many things, and to see those Sacraments that the knowledge of God will show him. He will see the things, which are about to happen beforehand, and glorious revelations will be made known to him as unto the saints, and he will do mighty works, and everything, which he asks from God he shall receive."

After saying these and other things, which concerned the rules of the life of ascetic excellence, to us, he added the following. "It is right that every one who is a man of discernment should wait for his departure from this world as if he were going to approach a life of happiness. He should not set before his eyes the humiliation of the body. He should not fill his belly with what he has; for the thoughts of him that fills himself full of meats resemble those of men who are fed upon delicate meats. Strive in your life and deeds to acquire the power of enduring lusts and appetites patiently. Do not let a man seek after the fine things, and those that are gratifying to the body. Let him restrain himself in the short time which we have here so that he may inherit rest and relaxation in the kingdom of God. It is said, 'Through abundant tribulation it is meet for us to enter into the kingdom of God.' In this manner also Paul the Apostle admonished us, and spoke what he learned from our Redeemer, Who said, 'How straight and narrow is the way which leads to life, and few there be who find it.' How broad is the gate, and wide the way that leads to destruction, and many there be who travel upon it. Let us not be in despair in this country, for in a very little while we shall depart to the world of rest; and let not any man be unduly exalted through the fair deeds, which he performs, but let him be always in a state of penitence. Let him take himself away far into the desert whenever he feels within himself that he is becoming unduly exalted, for on several occasions the monastic dwelling that is near to villages had harmed those who were perfect. He must do as did one to whom this happened, who said in his Psalm 'Behold, I fled away to a remote place, and I took up my abode in the whirlwind, and I waited for God to deliver me from littleness of soul, and from the spirit of the world.' This very thing had happened to many of our own brethren, and because of their pride they fell away from the mark that they had set for themselves."

ON TEMPTATION

“There was a certain brother who dwelt in a cave in the desert near to Shaina. He followed the ascetic life with utmost strenuousness. He used to provide himself with bread day by day by the labor of his hands. Because he was constantly in prayer, he excelled greatly in praiseworthy actions, so he had confidence in himself, and was proud of his fair life and deeds. The Tempter, having asked God for him as he asked Him for Job, showed him the form of a beautiful woman who was wandering in the desert in the evening. This woman, finding the door of the cave open, leaped up, and passed through the door. She fell on the knees of the man, beseeching him to let her rest there because the night had overtaken her. He, having compassion upon her, did which was not right; he received her into the cave. He wished to learn from her how she had come to lose her way. She spoke to him, and sowed words of sin and of incitement to lust in his ears. She prolonged her conversation with him so that by means of her lustful flattery she might excite him to the hateful lust. There being much speech between them, together with laughter and jesting, she led him astray little by little by means of much speaking until she took hold of his hand, then his beard, then his neck, and finally she made the valiant man her captive.

Meanwhile as thoughts of these things were chasing each other through his mind, and he believed that the matter was in his own hands, he waited for the moment and the opportunity when he would be able to fulfill his lust. Having delivered himself over to his wicked imagination, he strove diligently to work it out, and to be united to the woman like a man who had lost his mind, and like a horse mad with desire, and as he was about to fulfill his lust, the woman cried out several times, and suddenly escaped from out of his hands. She flew away like a shadow. Immediately there was heard in the air the great shouts of laughter of the multitudes of devils who had overthrown him and made him to fall into error. They cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and as for you, O you who did exalt yourself to the heavens, behold, you have been brought down into the deepest depth.’

After these things the man rose up in the morning clothed with the grief of the whole night. He beat his breast and cried over himself the whole day through. Having given up all hope of his redemption, he did that which was unseemly and went back to the world again. For it is of the cunning of the Evil One that, having vanquished a man in the strife, he brought him to a senseless state of despair, and he was never able to stand up again. Therefore, O my sons, do not dwell in caves near the villages. Meeting with women is not beneficial to us, for we keep in our minds a remembrance that cannot be blotted out

from the mind, both of their words and appearance. It is, moreover, not right that we should reduce ourselves to despair; for behold, many men have been in despair about themselves, but the compassion of God has not forsaken them."

ON REPENTANCE

"There was a young man in a certain city who had committed multitudes of sins and great wickedness, with a most evil intent. Yet, at a sign from God he repented of his sins, and departed to the place of the tombs. He wept over his former sins; and cast himself on the ground face downwards. He did not care to lift up his voice or to make mention of the Name of God in his mouth, or to make entreaty to Him. He thought that he was not worthy to live. Before his death he shut himself up in the place of the tombs, groaning from the depth of his heart, because he had lost all hope of his life. When he had passed a whole week of days in this manner, those devils who had formerly injured his life rose up against him by night, and cried out, saying, 'Where is that corrupt and filthy man who, having filled himself as full as he could with pollution and corruption, does now unseasonably and suddenly appear to be both chaste and good, and because he is not able to do so he wishes to become a Christian, and a man of well ordered life? What then is the beautiful thing that you expect to acquire now that you have satisfied yourself with every kind of wickedness? Will you not stand away from where you are, and come with us and enjoy the things that you usually have? Behold, whores and tavern companions are waiting for you, will you not then come and gratify your lust with us? Every hope for you has been extinguished, and truly your punishment shall arrive swiftly, and in this manner you will slay yourself. Why are you terrified at the idea of punishment, O wretched man? Why do you strive that it may not come on you swiftly?' They said to him very many other things, and cried out to him, 'You are ours, for you made a covenant with us. You did commit every kind of wickedness, and you were worse than every one of us. Would you dare to flee from us? Will you not return us an answer? Agree to and go out with us?'

But the young man continued to weep steadily. He neither inclined his ear to listen to them, nor answered them. Then, when those devils had remained with him a long time and had done nothing to him, as they were speaking, wicked and abominable devils laid hold upon him. They smote him with severe stripes, and tore his whole body to pieces. They entreated him most evilly, and departed, leaving him with very little life in him. The young man lay groaning

in the same place where they left him, for he was unable to turn around and depart to another place. Shortly afterwards, when he had regained a little of his breath, the members of his house and his relatives went out in sorrow to seek him. When they found him they learned from him the cause of the stripes. They besought him to go with them to his house; but the young man did not yield to their frequent and urgent entreaties.

On another night, those devils made to come upon him with stripes which were more numerous and more severe than the former ones. He, nevertheless, would not consent to depart from that district at the entreaty of his relatives, but he said to them, 'It is better for me to die thus than to live with the blemishes of this world on me.' On the third night, however, within a very little, through the multitudinous stripes of the devils, he departed from this temporary life, for they fell upon him without mercy, and they smote him with blows where the former blows had fallen. They entreated him so evilly that he was obliged to fight for his breath. When they saw that he would not yield to them, they left him for death and departed. They went away from him, crying out and saying, 'You have conquered us, you have conquered us, you have conquered us.' Afterwards nothing evil came upon him. The pure young man continued to dwell in the grave and to lead a pure life gloriously. He was so weighted with the fear of God in the wonderful and mighty deeds that he made manifest. Many folk marveled at him, and desired greatly to do as he did, for those who had entirely abandoned all hope of their souls devoted themselves to the performance of his excellent rules of life. In him was fulfilled what is written, 'Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.' Therefore, O my sons, I beseech each and every one of you, before all things, to lead a life of humility. Humility is the foundation of all the glorious virtues; but besides this, the dwelling in a remote desert place is exceedingly helpful to the performance of deeds of ascetic excellence."

ON HUMILITY

"There was also another solitary monk who dwelt in a place a long way off in the desert. He led for many years a life of perfection with all credit. In his old age he became tempted by devils. He had been a strenuous man and had loved the life of quiet contemplation all his days, and he excelled exceedingly in prayers, in singing praises, and in multitudes of visions. Spiritual manifestations were revealed to him with such scrupulous exactness, some in revelations and some in dreams. He was finally able to walk in the footsteps of incorporeal beings because he was not established in the earth, and he took no care about his

food. He never sought in the trees the things healthy for the body, neither in the green herb, nor in the birds, nor in the animals of the desert. He was full of trust in God. From the time when he went out from the habitation of men into that of the desert, he had no care in his mind about his living or about supporting his body. He was wholly forgetting all such things and his whole love was exalted to God. He awaited a call from Him about his departure from this world. He enjoyed exceedingly the visions and the hope of what was to come. His body did not shrink by reason of length of years nor did his soul decay. He possessed a beautiful nature through his chaste life. God took care of him, and at certain intervals, that is, once every two or three days, he found bread upon his table. Whenever he felt that his body needed food, he would go to the cave, take rest, refresh himself, and bow before God. He would return to his praises, and say 'Amen.' Rejoicing in his peace every day he added to the glory of his life and works. He became stronger daily in the hope of what is to come. He was confident that he would depart from this world in virtue, which actually took place within a very short time from his fall, through the temptation that subsequently came on him.

But why should we not tell the story of his sin that was exceedingly close? He became proud in his mind, thinking that he was better than many, that he possessed some faculty for goodness which was greater than that possessed by all other men, trusting in himself that this really was so. At no remote time there was born in him first of all a degree of negligence which was so small that it might be imagined that it was not negligence. There burst into existence contempt, which is a greater sin than negligence, and then sluggishness made itself felt. As a result of these things he used to stand up in vigil and prayer in a listless fashion, the entreaty of his prayer became small, his praises of God were short, his soul longed for pleasures, his mind inclined to terrestrial things, his thoughts wandered to hateful things, and in secret he meditated upon the abominable things of lust. However, the constraint of his former life and deeds was still with him as a protection. After his usual prayer, he found on his table the bread that God had given to him. He ate and was refreshed. Because he did not cast away his shortcomings, and did not consider that his negligence injured his strenuousness in ascetic virtues, he increased his zealotry in the performance of other things which were hateful, he did not turn to the healing of his wickedness, and it was a small matter in his sight that he had fallen away entirely from the things which were seemly, the evil lust of filthy fornication seized his mind, and carried him away in his thoughts to the world.

Having remained thus for one day, he turned to his usual service of singing the Psalms, praying, and praising God. He went into the cave, and found his

bread that had been placed there at the fixed time. The bread was not as pure as it was usually, but somewhat dirty. He marveled and was sad about it. He ate the bread and was refreshed. On the third night there was added a threefold evil, and he delivered over his wicked mind quickly to his guilty thoughts. It now seemed in his consciousness as if there was a woman close to him, lying by his side, as if he was looking at her with his eyes, and as if he was actually performing an act of union with her. On the third day he went out to his occupation of prayer and praise, but his thoughts were not clean, and his mind was wandering here and there. He was moving the sight of the pupils of his eyes in all directions. The remembrance of his lusts shortened his good work. He went back in the evening seeking for bread. When he went into the cave he found upon his table the bread, some of it has been eaten by the mice, another part had been gnawed by dogs, and the rest was dry. He groaned again and wept, but not sufficiently to restrain him from his wickedness. Having eaten the bread, which was not according to his taste, he endeavored to take some rest.

Again the evil thoughts stirred in him, and made war upon his mind so that they might lead him along the road and carry him to the world. He rose up by night and went out his cave to travel in the desert to Shaina. While he was still far from the habitations of men, the day overtook him, and the heat of the sun afflicted him. He looked around him that, hoping perhaps, he might see a monastery where he might enter and rest himself. He saw a monastery, and when he went into it, the chaste and believing brethren who regarded him as a true father received him. They washed his face and his feet. When they had prayed, and set a table, they entreated him lovingly to partake of whatever they had. When he had eaten and was refreshed, they asked him to address to them a word of help and to tell them how they might be able to escape from the crafty snares of the Enemy, to rise up, and to prevail like men over lustful thoughts. Then the monk, like a father who was admonishing his sons, commanded them to persevere in the labors of ascetic life, even to weariness, as men who, after a short time, would depart to abundant delight. Having spoken to them several other most excellent things, he helped them greatly.

Having made an end of his reproving discourse, he remembered himself a little, and thought within himself saying, 'How is it that I am able to rebuke others, and remain myself without reproof?' Having understood his guilt, he ran back with all speed to the desert, and wept over himself, saying, 'If it had not been that the Lord helped me my soul would have been destroyed by misery. For I am within a very little, of falling into every kind of wickedness. My life would have been destroyed in the earth.' It was fulfilled in him the

saying, 'A man is helped by his brethren, even as a city is helped by its fortress, and he is like a wall which shall never fall.' From that time, for the whole period of his life, that monk mourned and wept because he was deprived of his heavenly table. He obtained his daily bread only by means of great toil. He shut himself up in the cave, and put on sackcloth and ashes. He humbled himself in prayer. He neither rose up from earth nor ceased from groans and sighs, until he heard in a dream a sound of angels that came to him, and said, 'God had received your repentance, and had mercy upon you. Therefore take good heed that you do not stumble a second time into sin. The brethren whom you admonished shall come to you, console you, and shall bring to you a blessing which you shall receive from them. You shall be refreshed and give thanks to God always.'

These things which I have narrated to you, O my sons, show that you should acquire humbleness of mind before every other thing in your life, deeds, and all matters that belong to you, whether they are small or great. This is the first commandment of our Redeemer, Who said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Take good heed that you do not be confounded by the Devil when filthy visions arise in you. Do not go astray after devils when they show you a lying vision. If anyone comes to you, a brother, a friend, a wife, an old man, a father, a teacher, a mother, a sister, a son, or a daughter, first of all lift up your hands in prayer. If any lying vision of devils should come, it will depart quickly from before you. If men or devils lead you astray, incite you to sin by flattering you, do not be persuaded by them. Do not be lifted up in your minds. For in this way they have led even me astray on several occasions. The devils would let me neither pray nor take my rest in the night season. They used to show me lying visions the whole night. In the morning they would laugh at me, and bend the knee before me, saying, 'Father, let us vex you by day in the same way as we did all night.' I would say to them, 'Get away from me, O you workers of iniquity. You shall not vex the servant of God.'"

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

"Therefore, O my sons, after quietness, follow after love and peaceful meditation. Train yourselves at all times in the vision of excellence, and you shall acquire in prayer to God and the broadness of a pure mind. For he is a good and fair athlete of Christ, and a noble and strenuous man, who shall at all seasons train himself in labors, who shall do fair deeds continually, who shall show out love for the brethren and strangers, who shall perform love

and mercy, who shall visit and relieve all those who are near to him, who shall help the suffering and support the sick, and who shall bring his days to an end without stumbling. For if a man bring his days to an end without stumbling, even though he labor in, and is held fast by the things of earth, he is a fair, good, noble, soldier, worker and doer of the commandments.

“The spectator of the mind who leaves all these things for others to administer or provide is far better, more excellent and greater than he. This spectator of mind pursues spiritual instead of corporeal things, and leaves the transitory things of this world to others. He denies, forgets himself, takes up his cross and cleaves to Christ. He embraces the heavenly things continually. He escapes everything earthly, and draws near to God. He will not allow himself to be drawn to turn behind him through any care whatsoever. Such a man is, through his godly works, and the praises that he offers up continually before God, with God. Being free and unfettered by any tie whatsoever, he stands before God in security. His mind is not drawn away by any other care. He who is in this condition holds converse with God continually, and offers up to Him unceasingly praise and glorifying. It is necessary that those who seek after God should forsake everything that is visible. They should turn themselves completely towards God, and commit themselves to Him that He may protect their lives. For the man in whom God dwells does not even know that the world exists, since the whole of creation is an alien thing in his eyes. He is crucified to the world, and it is, the world, accounted by him as nothing.”

CONCLUSION

These were the things which the blessed John related to us (now he told us many others). He conversed with us for three days, and healed our souls until the season of the ninth hour. When he gave us his blessing, he spoke to us also a word of prophecy, saying, “This day letters recording the victory of Theodosius the Emperor had entered Alexandria, and these make known that he killed (A.D. 394) Eugenius the tyrant, and the death which the Christian Emperor Theodosius himself will die.” These things actually happened as he said. Having seen many other fathers, other brethren came and informed us that the life of the blessed John had come to an end in a most excellent and exemplary manner. He commanded him (i.e. his disciple) that for three days no man should be allowed to go up to him. He bowed his knees in prayer. His life was crowned, and he went to our Lord, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Here end the Triumphs of the Blessed Saint John.

3. The Triumphs of the Holy Man Abba Hor

WE SAW ANOTHER WONDERFUL MAN NAMED ABBA HOR. He was the Abba of a thousand monks. He had an angelic form and was of about ninety years old. His white and beautiful beard flowed down over his breast. His countenance was so glorious that those who saw him were reprov'd just by his sight. This blessed man had lived for a very long time a life of the utmost austerity at a remote place in the desert. Subsequently, he took certain monasteries in the desert near Shaina. He gathered a brotherhood, and planted so many wild trees at that spot that they formed a dense wood in the wilderness. The fathers who lived with him said that before his coming from the desert, there was not even a shrub in the place. He planted these trees in order to fill a want, and to prevent the brethren from being troubled by searching for wood. In his prayer to God, he took the same pains and strove that all the needs of the brethren might be supplied, that they would only have to be anxious about their redemption, and that nothing which they used might be wanting for them, so that they might have no excuse for negligence. When the blessed man formerly lived in the desert of Dalgaw he used to eat roots and herbs. He used to drink water when he was able. He passed the whole time of his life in prayer and praise. When he reached his complete old age, an angel appeared to him in a dream, and said, "You shall become a great race. You shall be set in authority over numerous people. Those who shall be saved through you shall be ten myriads in number. You shall be a governor in the new world, and above every one else in the world you shall have life." The angel added, "Do not fear, for you shall never be in want of food, until the day of your departure from this world."

Having heard these things the blessed Abba Hor journeyed on his way diligently and came to the desert which is near to Shaina, and first of all he lived there by himself in a little tabernacle, which he made, and he fed upon garden herbs soaked in vinegar, and on several occasions he ate only once a week. And because originally he had no knowledge of letters, when he rose up to go forth from the desert into Shaina, the knowledge of the Holy Books was given to him by Divine Grace so fully that he was able to repeat all the Scriptures by heart; and when he had come to Shaina and a book was given to him by the brethren to read, he read it forthwith as if he were a man who had been always acquainted with books. There was added to him also the gracious gift of being able to cast out devils, and many of them came to him by the constraint of this gift, against their wills, and would shriek out through his acts. He wrought so many other cures so often that from all sides there were

gathered together to him brethren who lived in monasteries, one thousand in number.

When the man of God saw us, he rejoiced in us, and saluted us, and immediately he offered up a prayer; and he washed our feet with his own hands, and began to teach us, for he was exceedingly well acquainted with the Scriptures, even as a man who had received the gift from God, and he expounded to us many chapters of the Scriptures, and delivered to us the orthodox faith; moreover, he urged us to prayer, and to partake of the Sacraments. For it was the habit of all the great monks not to give food to their bodies until they had offered spiritual sustenance to their souls, that is to say, the participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. Having partaken of the Sacraments we gave thanks to God, and he urged us to come to the table of food, and he called to our recollection the ascetic lives of noble men, and said, "I know a certain man in this desert who for three years past has not eaten anything which is of this earth, but an angel comes to him once in three days, and brings him heavenly food and places it in his mouth, and this suffices him instead of meat and drink. I know that there came to this man in a lying vision devils who were in the forms of horses and chariots of fire and numerous horsemen, as if they had come from a king, and they said to him, 'You had become perfect in everything, O man, but now, bow down and worship me, and I will take you up to heaven like Elijah.' Then the monk said in his mind, 'I worship the King and Redeemer every day, and if this creature were a king he would not ask me to worship him now.' When he had said to him that which was in his mind, 'I have a King, and I worship Him always, and you art not a king,' immediately the Devil removed himself and was no more found." Abba Hor told us these things because he wished to conceal his own rules and manner of life, and to tell us stories about those of other monks, but the fathers who were always with him told us that it was Abba Hor himself who had seen these things.

This man was more glorious in his life than very many of the fathers. Because of the multitude of the monks who came to him he used to call the brethren who were with him, to come to make houses for the new comers each day. Some of the brethren spread the mud, and others brought the bricks, and others cut down the wood, and when their building was finished, he would supply the needs of those who came. On one occasion a lying brother who had hidden his clothes came to him, but the blessed man rebuked him before every man, and brought his clothes into the light, so that as a result of this exposure no man might in future dare to tell a lie in his presence. The beauty of his life and deeds made him so glorious that he was able to gather together very many monks to him, and one saw the congregation of the monks with him in the

church like a band of righteous men who were splendid in their garb, and they glorified God with praises continually. Here end the Triumphs of Abba Hor.

4. The Triumphs of Abba Ammon

WE SAW IN THEBAID ANOTHER MAN whose name was Ammon, who was the Abba of three (or thirty) thousand monks. They called these monks also men of Tabenna. They lived lives of the greatest austerity, and they used to put their head cloths over their faces, and they covered themselves when they ate, and they turned their looks towards the ground, so that one might not see the other. They kept strict silence, so that they might think that they were in the desert, and they did these things in order that each might hide his works of ascetic excellence from his fellows. When they sat at the table it was a mere matter of form, and they did so in such a way as to deceive each other, and to make each other say, "Behold, they are eating." Some of them only carried their hands to their mouths once or twice and took a piece of bread, or an olive, or a portion of something else of all the food which was set before them, and it was to them sufficient for a meal. Others ate in silence a piece of bread only, and endured hunger without touching any of the other dishes of food which were placed before them. Others only reached out their hands to the dishes of cooked food three times and ate. Now their souls were weaned from everything. Since we marveled at all their glorious deeds we obtained benefit from them all. Here end the Triumphs of Abba Ammon.

5. The Triumphs of Abba Abban (Benus)

WE SAW ANOTHER BLESSED MAN WHOSE VIRTUES were more abundant than those of all other men, and whose name was Abban (Benus). The brethren who were with him related that he had never sworn, or told a lie, or been angry with any man, or rebuked any man even by a word. He had passed his whole life in silent contemplation and in humility, and in his manner of life he was as one of the angels, and he clothed himself in the deepest humility. When we had entreated him earnestly to address to us a word of exhortation, it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could be persuaded to say to us a few words. On one occasion, when the laborers in the fields which were near the river begged him to drive away a certain hippopotamus which was doing them harm by his great strength, the blessed Abba Abban (Benus) commanded

the animal in a gentle voice, saying, "I adjure you to depart in the name of Jesus Christ." The hippopotamus, as if driven away by an angel, never more appeared in that district. Here end the Triumphs of Abba Abban.

6. *The History of the Monks of Oxyrhyncus*

WE CAME ALSO TO OXYRHYNcus, a great city in Thebaid, but we are not able to relate all the wonderful things which we saw there; for the city is so full of the habitations of the brethren that the walls thereof are well near thrust out with them, so many are the brethren! There are so many other monasteries round about the walls, on the outside, that one would think that they were another city, and the sanctuaries of the city, and the temples which are there in, and all the spaces about them, are filled with the monks. Besides these there were thirteen churches in which the people assembled, for the city was exceedingly large. There was a place set apart for the monks to pray in each of the monasteries, and one might think that the monks were not very much fewer in numbers than the ordinary inhabitants of the city, for they were so numerous that they even filled the buildings at the entrances to the city, and some of the monks lived in the towers by the side of the gates thereof. The people said that the monks who lived inside were five thousand in number, and that five thousand brethren lived round about it, and there was not an hour, either of the day or the night, in which they were not performing the service of God.

But there were also heretics in the city, and they were not of the heathen who dwelt therein. All the inhabitants of the city were believers, and they would listen to the Scriptures so readily that the Bishop was able to proclaim peace to the people even in the streets; and the officers and the princes of the city, who were lavish in their gifts to the congregations, used to place watchers at the gates and entrances thereof that if they saw any needy person or any stranger they might bring him to them, in order that they might supply his need from their gifts. What shall we say concerning the fear of God which was in these men to such a degree that, when they saw us, who were strangers, passing through the streets, they drew near, like angels, to us and helped us? How can a man describe adequately the multitude of monks and the innumerable virgins who used to live there? We would make known that which we have learned from the holy Bishop who was there, namely, that he had under his authority ten thousand monks and twenty thousand virgins. I am wholly unable to express how great is the love of strangers and the affection which exist among

these men and women, for our cloaks and the other portions of our apparel were well near torn to rags by the force which each one of them, in the ardour of his love, displayed in dragging us to his home. We saw there multitudes of fathers and of great monks who possessed gifts of diverse kinds, for some had the gift of speaking, and some of doing works, and some of doing mighty deeds, and some of working signs. Here ends the history of the monks in the city of Oxyrhyncus.

7. The Triumphs of Abba Theon

WE ALSO SAW ANOTHER BLESSED MAN, who lived at some distance from the city, at a place which faced the open desert, and his name was Theon. He was a holy man who had shut himself up in a small house by himself, and he had kept silence for thirty years, and because he had performed many mighty deeds he was held to be a prophet among the people. For everyday a multitude of sick folk went forth to him, and he would stretch out his hand through the window and lay it upon them, and would send them away healed. The countenance of the blessed man appeared to be like that of an angel, and his eyes sparkled, and he was filled with all the grace of God. A short time ago certain thieves came by night against the blessed man from a great distance, thinking that they would find a large quantity of gold with him, and they were prepared to kill him, but when he had said a prayer they found themselves fast bound with ropes before the door, and they had to stay there until the morning. When the crowds of people came to him in the morning, they had it in their minds to commit the thieves to the flames, but the blessed man felt himself urged to speak a word to the men, and he said, "Let these thieves depart in peace, for if you do not let them, the gracious gift of healing which I possess will depart from me." Then the multitudes listened to his words, for they did not dare to treat them lightly, and immediately the thieves went and took up their abode with the brethren and monks, and changed their former manner of life, because they truly repented of that which they had done in the past.

This man, through the gift which God had bestowed upon him, knew three languages, and he was able to read Greek, Latin, and Egyptian, a fact concerning the blessed man which we have learned from many folk; and when he knew that we were strangers he wrote down the fact in a book, and thanked God on our behalf. His food consisted of garden herbs, and they said that he used to go forth from his cell by night and mingle with the wild animals of

the desert, and he gave them to drink of the water, which he found. The foot marks which appeared by the side of his abode were those of buffaloes, and goats, and gazelle, in the sight of which he took great pleasure. Here end the triumphs of Abba Theon.

8. The Triumphs of Abba Elijah

WE ALSO SAW ANOTHER PRIEST IN THE DESERT OF ANTINOE, the metropolis of the Thebaid, whose name was Elijah. He was about one hundred and ten years old, and the monks used to say that the spirit of Elijah the Prophet rested upon him. This blessed man Elijah was famous in the desert, for he had lived there for seventy years, and it is wholly impossible to find a word which would adequately describe the sterility and desolation of that desert, and of the mountain in which he lived. He never went down to Shaina, but there was a narrow path along which a man could walk with the greatest difficulty and make his way to him guided by the rough stones that were placed on both sides of the way; and his dwelling was under a rock in the cave. Now his appearance was terrible, for by reason of old age, which had laid its hold upon him he trembled greatly. Nevertheless he worked signs daily, and he never ceased to heal the sick. The fathers told us concerning him that there was no man among them who could remember the time when he went up to live in the mountain. In his old age he used to eat three ounces of bread every evening, and three olives, but in his early manhood he partook of food only once a week, and subsisted thereon. Here ends the triumph of Abba Elijah.

9. The Triumphs of the Blessed Apollo and Ammon

APOLLO

WE SAW ANOTHER PRIEST, NAMED APOLLO, who lived in the Thebaid, on the borders of Hermopolis, where our Redeemer went with Mary and Joseph, to fulfill the word of Isaiah, who said, "Behold the Lord is mounted upon swift clouds and shall go into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall tremble before Him, and shall fall upon the earth." We also saw there the house of idols that fell down upon their faces on the ground when our Redeemer went into that city. Moreover, we saw that this man who dwelt in the desert was an Abba of five hundred monks living in the monasteries around the base of

the mountain. He was exceedingly well known throughout the land of the Thebaid. He possessed the excellent virtues of the ascetic life. God performed many great and mighty deeds through him. Many great signs took place by his hand. This man Apollo performed wonderful ascetic labors from his youth up. In his old age, he was held to be worthy of an act of grace from God. When he was eighty years old, he took possession of a great monastery containing five hundred marvelous men, who were also able to work miracles. After he was fifteen years older (i.e. when he was ninety-five years of age), he departed from this world, of these he had lived forty years in the inner desert, where he led a perfectly spiritual life.

Towards the end, he heard a voice like to that of an angel, saying, "Apollo, I am about to destroy the wisdom of the wise men of Egypt by your hands. I will remove the knowledge, which is not knowledge, of the fools of the nations. You shall destroy for Me with them also the wise men of Babel (i.e. Babylon of Egypt). You shall wipe out all the service of devils. Now, get away quickly to the desert, to the region which is near to the habitations of men, for you shall beget for Me a holy people, who shall be exalted by their good works." Apollo answered, saying, "My Lord, take away from me pride, lest I become unduly exalted over the brotherhood, and I lose all the blessing accordingly." The divine voice spoke again to him, saying, "Place your hand on your neck, and whatever you lay hold upon, take it down and bury it in the sand." He quickly laid his hand on his neck, and laid hold of a small black creature. He buried him in the sand, as the creature cried out, saying, "I am the spirit of pride." The voice again came to him, saying, "Go and whatever you shall ask from God shall be given to you."

The blessed man, after hearing this, set out to come to Shaina, in the time of Julian the Emperor and tyrant. At first he lived in a desert near to Shaina, in a small cave he found there on the side of the mountain. His occupation was as following. He offered up prayer to God the whole day through. He prayed one hundred times in the night. He bowed his knees during his prayers. Concerning his food, he took no care at all. Food was given to him by God, and was brought to the desert by an angel. His apparel consisted of a short-sleeved garment covering his body, and a small napkin on his head. These remained on him in the desert and never wore out. He lived in the desert near Shaina in the power of the spirit. He worked miracles, and performed many wonderful cures. The glory of his miracles is impossible for a man to describe. But thus we have heard from the perfect elders who were around him, and from the heads and governors of the brotherhood. This man was famous as a new prophet, and as an apostle who had appeared in our generation. When

his fame travelled abroad on all sides, all monks who lived scattered in various places came to him in a body as to a true father, and offered themselves to him as an offering. The blessed man stirred up some of them to divine visions and others to glorious deeds of spiritual excellence. He firstly showed them by actual examples the things that he was exhorting them to do by his words. He incited them on several occasions to perform work of ascetic excellence. One Sundays, he ate with them, tasting nothing but the herbs that grew of themselves in the earth. He neither ate bread, pulse, fruits of trees, nor anything else prepared by fire.

In the reign of Julian, the blessed Apollo heard that a certain brother, who had been seized for military service, was thrown into prison. Abba Apollo took the brethren and went to visit him, to comfort him. Having gone to him, he told that brother to endure the suffering, and to despise the tribulations that were surging in upon him, for the sake of the promised hope. It was a season of strife, and the believing mind was sorely tried by the temptations that came upon it. When he had strengthened the soul of the brother by these words, one of those who had been appointed by the Chiliarch to guard him said to the Chiliarch, "The brethren wish to get that man out of the prison." When the Chiliarch heard this, he rose up, and came in an evil fury. He shut the doors of the prison, set seals upon them, and appointed stricter guards. He thus confined the blessed Abba, and all the brethren who were with him, in the prison, saying, "These men also are useful for military service." He then departed to his house without listening to the petition they made to him. In the middle of the night the angel of the Lord holding a lamp in his hand, lit up with his light the whole prison so brightly that all the watchmen were astonished. They entreated the brethren who were inside to go away from them. The doors were opened before them; but they said, "It is better for us to die for them, than to neglect the freedom which had been sent from God to men who have been imprisoned in an unseemly manner." The Chiliarch and his noblemen came in the morning to the prison. They pressed the brethren to depart from the city, as his house had fallen down through an earthquake, and had buried the noble folk of his house. When they heard this they went out, and glorified God with a loud voice. They departed to the desert rejoicing.

These brethren lived together similarly to the Apostles. They possessed one mind and one soul. The blessed Abba admonished them daily that they should excel in glorious works, and that they should drive away quickly and immediately to a distance, before they came, the evil crafts of the Calumniator which burst into the thoughts. For he said, "When the head of the serpent is bruised all his body dies, for our Lord commanded us to be watchful against

the head of the serpent, which is this, 'We must not only take care that filthy and corrupt thoughts do not come into our minds, but we must blot out also the hateful appearances which are produced in our minds.' Therefore, strive eagerly and earnestly that you may emulate each other in the gloriousness of the ascetic works. Thus no man may be found to be in any way inferior to his neighbour in spiritual excellence. The sign that you have approached the glory of ascetic labors is when you can keep your bodies from the passions of the lusts. The beginning of the gift of God is when a man acquires the manifestation of the wonderful character, which is from God. Otherwise he may become unduly lifted up in his thoughts and feel superior to his fellows. He might become like a man who feels he is worthy of all this grace; but if not, he will certainly forget that he lacks divine grace, and that it had been snatched away from his mind."

This Abba possessed the precious treasure of great doctrine in his mind. We also heard that his works were more excellent than his teaching. For every petition he asked of God was granted to him. Visions also appeared to him. On one occasion he saw that his brother, who was older than himself, who also brought his life to an end in the desert, possessed more spiritual works than himself. He saw, as in a dream, that he had become a counterpart of the Apostles, and that God had made him inherit glory. He was begging and entreating Him to bring his departure from the world speedily, so that he might rest with him in heaven. It was said to him by our Redeemer, "It is necessary for Apollo to live on earth a little longer, until many shall become perfect through envy of his glorious deeds. He is being prepared to set over a great nation of monks, and men who cultivate righteousness. He will receive glory proportionate to his labor." These were the things that he saw, and they happened in connection with the congregation of monks who came to him. Through his abundant doctrine and numerous ascetic habits, they became aliens to the world. A great monastery for brethren grew up in the mountain, and five hundred men lived there together. They had their habitation in common, and sat at one table for meals. They appeared like angels. They were like workers who were ornamented with princely ornaments. They were arrayed in white apparel. Thus were fulfilled the words of the Scriptures, 'The dry desert shall rejoice, and the open plain shall leap for joy' and, 'Shout, and cry out, O you who have never brought forth, for the children of the barren woman are more numerous than those of her who had a husband.' The word of the Prophet concerning the church among the Gentiles was fulfilled, and was completed also by the desert of Egypt. The sons of God were more numerous there than in the land occupied by people. For in many of the cities

of Egypt true congregations of monks increased even as they drew near to God in the desert. In proportion as the nation was at peace even so did the monks multiply in the desert of Egypt. In these monks the words of the Apostle were fulfilled, 'Where sin increased there also did grace abound.'

At one time, in Egypt, the exceedingly abominable worship of idols was more common than among other nations, for they worshipped dogs, apes, and other things. Garlic, onions, and common garden herbs were considered to be gods. We heard that the holy man Apollo described the reason for the worship of idols among the Egyptians, as, "These heathen, and the early inhabitants of the country worshipped the bull because the bull was useful in plowing the ground, where they obtained their food. They worshipped the waters of the Nile because it irrigates their whole country. They worshipped the earth for it yielded them excellent crops, and it was far more excellent than the soil of other countries. They held in reverence their other polluted things, like dogs, apes, and all their abominable animals and vegetables, because these had been to them the cause of redemption. They were brought to nothing in the time of Pharaoh, when he drowned the children of Israel who were pursued by them. For they did not cleave to Pharaoh in that day, but each man among them made that which was his familiar spirit his god, saying, 'This is my god, and through him I shall not perish with Pharaoh.'"

Such were the things from the discourse of Apollo. It is necessary that we should write down his deeds before his words. Once heathen peoples dwelt in the various places around the blessed man. The ten villages near him were very wicked. They went astray in respect of the worship of idols. In one of these villages there was a temple. The idol in that village was very famous, and was made of wood. The priests danced before it, and carried it in a procession from village to village. The people also leaped and danced around it. Once, while they were performing their play on the bank of the river, the blessed Apollo, and few brethren with him, was passing through the district. When, from a distance, he saw the crowd began its devilish sports, he bowed the knee where he was, and prayed to the Redeemer of all. Immediately, all the people became bound with cords. He put all the heathen in such a state where they were unable to crawl away from that very spot. As they were unable to depart from that place, one by one became parched with thirst, and was obliged to suffer under the fierce heat of the sun the whole day. They marveled at what happened to them. Their priests said, "There is a certain Christian in your borders, and it is he who has done these things to you." They were speaking of the blessed man Apollo, who, by his prayers, had brought their festival to nothing. It is right that we make entreaty to him that we may not come into

tribulation.

When the inhabitants of the country around them heard these things, they came at the sound of the uproar and asked them, saying, "What is this commotion which has suddenly come upon you? What is the cause of it?" They said, "We do not know, but we have a suspicion, we confess, of a certain man who is a Christian, and who lives on the side of the mountain, and it is right that we should make entreaty to him." Then the inhabitants bore testimony, saying, "Yes, this blessed man did pass through this country, and the priests begged them that they would help them at once; and, wishing to know whether they were able to move the idol from his place, they brought oxen to draw him along, but the idol and the oxen became like beings who had been fixed there a long time." When there was not a successful issue to their undertaking on any side, and no help could be obtained by entreating the people around them, the priests of the idol sent to the holy man, saying that if they were delivered from that place, they would turn aside from all their error. When all these things had been told to the blessed man by a message, the Abba came down quickly, prayed over them, and released them from that restraint. Immediately, they all followed him, and believed in the Redeemer, the Lord of all, Who does wonderful things. Also, they delivered the idol over to burn in the fire. They became converted, were baptized, and were added to the number of the sons of the Church. Many of them lived to this very day in the habitation of the monastery. Upon the report of this, the old man went away quickly into every place, where many people believed in the Lord through him. In those borders henceforward no man gave himself the name of heathen.

After a short time two villages quarreled over certain fields. As soon as the blessed man heard of the fight, he went to them quickly, so he might sow peace between them. The men on one side would not be persuaded by his words. They disputed these words because they were relying on a certain mighty man, who was a captain of a band of thieves. The captain stood up on their behalf in the struggle. When Abba Apollo saw this man disputing fiercely, he said to him, "If you will be persuaded by me, O my beloved, I will beseech our Lord to forgive your sins." When the man heard these words, without any hesitation, he threw his weapons away from him, and fell at the knees of the holy man. The captain turned his partisans back to their houses. When there was peace between them, every man departed to his place. This famous captain of thieves clung to the blessed man, entreated him and openly demanded from him the fulfillment of his promise. The holy man took him to the desert, entreated him, and admonished him to be patient, saying, "God is able to grant you this thing." At night, the two men saw in a dream that they

were standing before the throne in heaven. They also saw that the angels and the righteous men worshipping God. When they knelt down on their knees, and bowed down on their faces before Christ, the voice of God came to them, saying, "What connection does light have with darkness? Or what portion has the believer with the unbeliever?" Why then does this murderer stand with this righteous man, seeing that he is not worthy of this sight? But, O man, go, for behold, this little one among your sons who has taken refuge in you shall be saved because of you." They saw, and also heard, other things that the mouth must not dare to utter nor the ear to hear. When they woke up they related the dream to those who were with them. Those who heard these exceedingly glorious stories of these men marveled that two men were able to relate one and the same dream. The captain of thieves remained in the monastery with the monks, and led a life of ascetic excellence until his departure from the world. He turned into a simple lamb from being the wolf he was. In him the prophecy was fulfilled of Isaiah, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat chopped straw like the ox."

We saw also there Ethiopians who lived with the monks, and they excelled to such a degree in the ascetic life that in them were fulfilled the words which are said in the Book, "Kush (Ethiopia) shall deliver the hand to God."

Once, when the heathen were arming against the Christians because of a dispute concerning the boundaries of certain territories, the blessed Apollo came to make peace between them. A certain chief of the force of the heathen was boasting and saying, "There can never be peace until death." The Abba said to him, "According to your word even so let it be, for no man on either side shall die except yourself; and the earth shall not be your grave, but the bellies of wild beasts." It happened that the man died. In the morning his body was found, having been torn to pieces by vultures and hyenas. When the matter was known, they gave thanks, and believed in Christ, saying, "This man is certainly a prophet."

The dwelling of the blessed Apollo was a cave formerly, with five brethren who had been converted by him in the desert before he left the wilderness. When Easter came, they had performed the service of God in the cave. They prepared whatever food they had to eat. Their food consisted of a small quantity of dried bread and pickled vegetables. The blessed Apollo said to them, "O my sons, if we are believers and true servants of Christ, each one of us, let us entreat God to give us whatever he will to eat." They devoted their whole petition to this object, despising themselves as men who were unworthy of this gracious gift. When the blessed man prayed with a joyful countenance, and made an end of his prayer, they all said, "Amen." They found in the night

certain men standing by the door of the cave. They were strangers, whom no man knew. They said concerning themselves that they had come from a far country. They had brought with them from that country many things of which the brethren had never heard, and never existed in the land of Egypt. These were various kinds of fruits from Paradise; grapes, pomegranates, figs, nuts, and almonds, which at that period did not exist in Egypt, honey in the comb, a box of milk, butter, dates of huge size, and ten loaves of bread that were still hot. The men who had brought these things gave them to them under the pretence that they were sent by a great, rich and honourable man. Then they returned to their own country with the greatest haste and diligence. The holy men partook of what was sent to them. The food was sufficient to last them until Pentecost. They were wondering and saying, "Assuredly, these have been sent to us by God." One of the monks who were with him entreated the blessed Apollo that he might offer up a prayer for him to be worthy of the gracious gift. After offering a prayer on his behalf, the graces of humility, of graciousness and of patient endurance, were bestowed on him to such a degree that many marveled at the excellence of the humility that he possessed. The fathers related to us stories of the wonderful and mighty works he performed. Many brethren testified concerning the miracles which he did.

A short time afterwards there was a great famine in the district of the Thebaid. When the people of the country were dwelling in that place they heard that the monks who were with the blessed man were living without labor. They gathered themselves, and came to him with their wives and children. They asked him for alms and food. He, like a man who did not fear that food would be short for himself and those who were with him, he gave to all those villagers and it was sufficient for each one of them from day to day. When three baskets full of bread were all that remained, and the famine was still severe, he commanded to bring these baskets into the midst of them, and he found that they would only suffice for one day's food for the monks, and for those who were with them. In the presence of all the crowds, and the whole brotherhood of monks, he said in a loud voice, "Is not the hand of the Lord able to increase these? For thus says the Holy Spirit, 'Bread shall not be wanting in these baskets until we all eat new bread.'" All those who were near him said, "In truth the bread was sufficient to feed them for four months." He was in the habit of doing thus from time to time in respect of oil and wheat, until Satan said to him, "Are you Elijah, another Prophet, or an Apostle, that you dare to act thus?" The blessed man said to him, "Why should I not act thus? Were not the holy Prophets and the blessed Apostles men? Have not the Fathers handed down to us the tradition that they used to do such things?

Or, is our Lord akin to them at one time and remote from them at another? Therefore, at all times God is able to do things like these. There is nothing difficult for Him. If then God is good, why are you, O corrupt one, evil? Why should I not describe the things that we saw with our own eyes?"

When the five hundred brethren were about to refresh themselves the baskets were full. After the brethren ate and were filled from them, by the blessing of the blessed Abba, they went away being full.

It is right that we should describe another miracle that we saw there and were marveled at. We, three brethren, went to visit the blessed Apollo. The brethren saw us from where he was, and they recognized us by the descriptions which they had heard from him of our journey. They met us with gladness and sang songs of praise. Such was the custom with all the brethren. After they bowed down with their faces to the ground, they rose up, gave us the salutation of peace, and said to their companions, "Behold, the brethren of whom our Abba spoke to us three days ago have come to us, for he had said, 'Behold, after three days, three brethren will come to you from Jerusalem.'" Some of the brethren were going before us, rejoicing and singing Psalms. Some followed behind answering them, until we arrived at the place where the blessed man was. When our father Apollo heard the sound of them singing, he came out to meet us, according to the custom of the brethren. When he saw us, he was the first to bow low to the ground. He stretched out his hand, rose up, kissed us, led us in, prayed, washed our feet with his own hands, and asked us to rest ourselves and to partake of food. This was also the custom to all the brethren who came to visit him. The brethren who were with him did not approach their food immediately. Firstly, they all partook of the Eucharist of Christ. They used to do this daily at the season of the ninth hour's prayer. Afterwards they ate their meal. While sitting at meals, they learned his commandments until the time for sleep. Then some of them would go out into the desert to repeat the Scriptures by heart, the whole night. Others would take their meal with them and would glorify God until the morning. We ourselves saw that such men began to sing the Psalms and hymns of praise in the evening. They continued to sing them till the day broke. Many of them used to come down at the ninth hour to receive the Eucharist, and then return to their places. The spiritual food alone would be sufficient for them till the ninth hour of the next day. Even thus they did, and many of them would continue to do so, and remain without ordinary food for several days at a time, even from one Sunday to another. We observed their joy in the desert, with which nothing on the earth, and no bodily delight, can be compared. There was among them no man who was sorry or afflicted with grief. If any man was found in affliction,

our father Apollo knew the cause for it, and was able to make known to him the secret thoughts of his mind. He would say to such one, "It is not seemly for us to be afflicted at our redemption. We are those who are about to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Let the Jews weep. Let the men of iniquity be in mourning. Let the righteous rejoice. For they have their happiness in earthly things, and cultivate the things of earth. Why should we not, who are worthy of the blessed hope, rejoice always, according to the encouraging words of the blessed Apostle Paul, who said, 'Rejoice in our Lord always, and pray at all seasons, and in everything give thanks.'"

What shall a man say concerning the grace that dwelt in the words of the blessed Apollo, or concerning his glorious qualities, about which, because of their great numbers, we keep silence, and concerning which we have heard from others? He discussed many things concerning strenuousness in ascetic deeds together with us. He exhorted us on how to receive the brethren. He told us that when the brethren came to visit us it was seemly to bow low before them. He explained that we do not bow down before them, but before the God Who is in them. He added that, "When you see your brother, you see Christ. The custom of urging the brethren from time to time to come in, rest and refresh themselves, we have derived from Abraham and Lot. They pressed the angels to stay with him. If it is possible it is fitting that the monks should partake of the Sacraments of Christ each day, and whoever shall make himself to be remote from them shall remove himself from God, and whoever shall do this shall receive our Redeemer always. For the voice of our Life Giver says thus, 'He who eats My Body, and drinks My Blood, remains in Me and I in him.' It is helpful to monks to remember the Passion of our Redeemer at all times. By this remembrance, we become worthy of the forgiveness of our sins always. Therefore it is right that we always make ourselves worthy to receive the Holy Sacraments of our Redeemer. Let then no man remit the well-known fasts which have been ordained unless for some cause which works tribulation. We keep the fast on the fourth day of the week because on that day the Jews plotted to betray our Lord. We fast on the eve of the Sabbath because on that day He was crucified. He who remits these becomes one of the betrayers and a Jew. If your brother comes to you during a period of fasting, and needs of refreshment, although the time is unseasonable, set before him your table and let him eat by himself. If he does not wish this, do not constrain him, for this is a universal tradition of hospitality."

The blessed man severely blamed those who wore woven stuffs and dressed their hair in a way that would be seen by children of men to be fasting. He called them seekers after the vainglory of men. Monks should humble their

bodies by fasting and abstinence. Monks should work the things that are good in secret. Those who do not do these things show themselves only to the multitude. What shall one say concerning all the teachings of the blessed man, which resembled his life and deeds, and are both impossible for a man to write down or to mention in a fitting manner. On several occasions, we conversed together the whole Sabbath.

AMMON

WHEN HE WAS ESCORTING US ON OUR WAY BACK he said to us, “may you have peace with one another. Let no man separate himself from his companion on the way.” He said to the brethren who were with him, “Who among you is willing of his own accord to go and escort these brethren on the way to the other fathers?” With but very few exceptions, all the brethren sought anxiously to go escorting us on our way. The holy man Apollo selected three of them, who were mighty in their ascetic labors and understanding in their speech. They had been instructed in the languages of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Egyptians. Sending them with us, he commanded them not to leave us until we had seen all the fathers whom we wished to see, and had rejoiced in conversing with them. It would have been impossible for a man to see all the fathers, even in the whole period of his life. He blessed us, and sent us away, saying, “May the Lord bless you out of Zion. May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.” As we were journeying along our way through the desert, at noon, we suddenly saw the marks of a monster serpent that had been lying like a log of wood on the sand. We were afraid, but the brethren who were with us bade us to be of good courage, saying, “Do not fear, but come and see us slay him by faith. For we have slain with our own hands many snakes, asps, and vipers, fulfilling what is written, ‘I have given to you power to trample under foot serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the Enemy.’” We, because of our terror, begged the brethren that we might go straight on our journey, and not to follow the trail of the serpent. One of them left us, went away and wandered about tracking the creature by the marks it had left behind. At length, he stood over its hole, and besought us to go and see it. The brethren who were with us encouraged us so to do, so we went but feeling afraid. A certain brother came to meet us, led us to the monastery, and said to us, “You are not able to resist the attack of the serpent, for it is of fifteen cubits long. I have never seen a serpent larger than this one.” We remained in our places to his words. The brother who found the serpent’s hole went and begged that brother to let us go and slay the serpent. He blamed us for our

little faith. He turned him back, took all of us into his monastery, made us rest there, and he related to me the following story.

“In the past times, a certain holy man, named Ammon, used to dwell in this monastery. It was him who converted me. The thieves used to vex him, for they stole his apparel and his food. Because of their vexatious attacks he went away and departed into the desert. He brought two great serpents and commanded them to guard the door of his abode. When the thieves came according to their custom, they saw the serpents and marveled, by reason of their fear. They fell down on their faces on the ground. After going out and seeing the thieves, the blessed man spoke to them, and reviled them, saying, ‘Observe how much you are worse than the serpents! These creatures are, for God’s sake, obedient to our command. You are neither afraid of God, nor do you hold His servants in reverence.’ He took them to his dwelling, fed them, admonished them, and told them that they ought to change their mode of life. Immediately they repented, took up their habitation in a monastery, and they excelled more than many in spiritual works, until they also were able to work miracles.

On another occasion the inhabitants of that country came to the blessed Ammon, and complained to him about another serpent. They entreated him to destroy it off their land because it used to slay their sheep and cattle. He, as one who was not able to help them, dismissed them. They went away in sorrow. In the morning he rose up, went to the place over which that serpent used to pass, and knelt down there in prayer. When the serpent came to pass, according to its want, and saw the blessed man, it blew upon him, hissed, and darted forward to strike him three times. Then the blessed man said to it boldly, ‘May Christ, the Son of God, Who is about to destroy the great serpent, destroy you also.’ After uttering the word, the serpent burst asunder, and all its gall and blood came out. When the inhabitants of the country came and saw the serpent, they marveled. At the command of the blessed man, because of the stench, they heaped up the sand on the serpent. Without the word of Abba Ammon they would not have approached the reptile, even though it was dead.

Once, a certain youth was pasturing sheep. He saw that serpent, and was smitten with wonder. He threw himself down in the field without saying a word. His kinsfolk went out to seek him. They found him at eventide in a wretched and terror stricken state. They brought him to the blessed Ammon, and told him that they did not know the cause of his condition. The blessed man prayed, and anointed him with oil. The boy was healed, and related what happened to him. For this reason especially the blessed man was constrained

to destroy that serpent.” Here end the triumphs of the blessed Apollo and Ammon.

10. The Triumphs of Abba Apellen

WE SAW ANOTHER ABBA NAMED APELLEN. He had persevered in the sternest and most austere ascetic labors with the brethren who were by his side, from his youth up. On several occasions, he carried fire in his bosom, and stirred up the brethren to give a manifestation of the miracles which they could work. He said to them, “If you are truly servants of God, manifest your glorious miracles.” Whenever he was by himself in the desert, the desire to eat honey rose up in him. He would immediately find a honeycomb on a rock. He used to say, “Go away from me, O evil desire, for it is written, ‘You shall walk in the spirit, and you shall not perform the lust of the flesh.’” Then he would leave the honeycomb on the rock and depart. When he fasted for three weeks in the desert, and found some fruits had been blown down, he would say, “I will neither taste nor touch it, lest I make to offend my brother, that is to say, myself. For it is written that man lives not by bread alone.” Then he fasted another week, slept a little, and an angel came to him in a dream, saying, “Rise up, and take as much as you can, and eat it.” Then he rose up, looked around him, and saw a fountain of water, and roots, which were exceedingly to be desired, growing round it. When he had drunk some water, and had eaten some green herbs, he said, “There is nothing so sweet and pleasant as this anywhere.” He found in that country a little cave where he dwelt in for a few days without food. When he began to feel hungered, he knelt down, and prayed. Immediately he found his food placed by his side hot bread, olives, and fruits of various kinds.

From time to time he used to visit the brethren who lived near him in the desert. He admonished them frequently. Once, he was very anxious to go to his own desert, and to carry there such things as were necessary for him of the blessings (i.e. gifts), which the brethren had given him. As he was going along the way he saw some goats feeding and he said to them, “In the Name of Jesus Christ, let one of you carry this load.” Immediately, one of them came and he placed his hands on its back, sat upon it, till he arrived to his cave within a day.

On another occasion, the blessed man spread out his bread in the sun. The wild animals came according to their custom to the fountain of water where it was, and any animal that approached the bread died.

Once, he went to certain monks on the first day of the week, and saw that they ceased to perform the service of the Holy Sacraments. He blamed them, saying, "Why do you not perform your service?" They said to him, "Because no priest had come to us from over the river." He replied, "I will go after him, and call him." Then they answered him, saying, "It is impossible for any man to cross over the river, for its depth, and for the crocodiles that destroy human beings." He went a little distance and came to the place where the river was usually crossed. He seated himself fearlessly upon the back of a crocodile, and passed over to the other side. After finding the priest, he entreated him not to neglect the brethren. When the priest saw that Apellen was dressed in old and ragged garments, he marveled at his humility, and the poorness of his apparel. He clung to him, and followed him to the cave. When they came to the river and found no boat to take them over, the blessed man Apellen cried out with a loud voice to that crocodile. The crocodile immediately heard and came to him. It made its back ready before the holy man to sit upon. The blessed man entreated the priest to sit with him to cross to the other side. When the priest saw the crocodile, he was afraid, and returned to his own place. The brethren dwelling in the mountain on the other side of the river, feared when they saw the blessed man sitting in the water on the back of the crocodile. As soon as he crossed over on to dry land, and had come up out of the water, he slew the crocodile, saying, "Death is better for you than punishment for the souls which you had already slain, and would slay." The animal died immediately.

Apellen remained with the brethren for three days. He sat and taught them the commandments. He made clear and plain the thoughts each one of them had, before them, saying, "This man is vexed by lust, by love of vainglory, by evil dislike, by pride, by arrogance, by envy, by boasting, by anger, by greediness, and this by avarice. This man is humble, and straight. These men are praiseworthy and good. These are bad and rebellious." He admonished them and showed out these things. When the brethren heard them they marveled, for truly it was even as he had said.

He said, "Prepare for us a meal of garden herbs, for many brethren are coming to us." When they prepared them, the brethren came, and saluted each other. One of them entreated him to let him be with him in the desert. The blessed man said to him, "You are not able to endure the temptations of devils." The brother said, "I can bear everything." Then having received him, Abba Apellen commanded him to dwell in a cave by the side of him. The devils came by night and sought to strangle him. First of all they troubled him sorely with filthy thoughts. The brother fled and departed from the cave. When he had shown all these things to the blessed Apellen, the Abba set out

and made for him an abode at a distance. He commanded him to live there without fear.

On another occasion, they were in the cave and lacked bread. An angel in the form of a brother brought them food. Once, when ten of the brethren had been seeking him by another way, had found him after they had been fasting for seven days. He commanded them to come in, to rest and refresh in his cave. When they reminded him about the food, he said to them, "God is able to prepare for us food in the wilderness." Immediately an angel of God in the form of a beautiful youth stood and knocked at the door whilst they were praying. They opened the door, and found there a youth carrying a large basket wherein were bread and olives. They took it from him, ate, and gave thanks to God. The youth removed himself from them. These and other wonderful things were performed by the blessed Apellen. Here end the triumphs of Apellen.

11. Of Another Apollo, and of John the Desert Dweller

WE SAW ANOTHER HOLY MAN IN THE REGION OF OR (or Akur, i.e. Acre), whose name was also Apollo. He was a righteous man. He was originally a blacksmith, but had converted to the way of truth. He labored in the service of the brethren, and supplied their needs. On one occasion Satan came to him in the form of a woman, who appeared to be anxious to work in the service of the brethren. The blessed man at the time happened to be working at his trade. He took up the red-hot iron, thrust it into the woman's face, and burned it so severely that she shrieked out. The brethren who were in the chambers heard her crying. From that time forward the blessed man was able to hold red-hot iron in his hands without being hurt. This man received us, gave us refreshment, and related to us the histories of the men who had both lived with him in that country or still living there.

"There is in this desert one of our brethren whose name is John, who is now exceedingly old. His works of ascetic excellence are superior to those of all the other monks in the country. No man can find him at once, because he wanders about from one place to another in the desert. During the early period of his life he stood for three whole years praying, and never sat down or went to sleep. He was in the habit of snatching a little sleep as he stood. A certain priest used to bring him the Offering (i.e. sacramental bread) from Sunday to Sunday. Besides that, he ate nothing. One day the devil stood up in the form of a priest, and was exceedingly anxious to bring him a woman. As soon as the blessed John recognized him, he said to the devil, 'Out upon you, O you who

are full of guile, you are the father of all falsehood, you are the enemy of all righteousness! Will you never cease to lead astray the souls of Christians? Do you dare to trample even the Holy Sacraments?' The Devil said to him, 'A very little more, and I should have been master over you in your fall. For thus have I led many a man astray. I have driven him out of his mind and made him mad. When many holy men made supplication to God on his behalf in their prayers, he came back to his senses.' Having said these things to him the Devil departed from him. The legs of the blessed man burst open because of standing much on them. A discharge of water and pus ran from them. The angel of the Lord drew near him and said, 'The Lord shall be your meat and the Holy Spirit your drink. You may be certain that this spiritual food shall suffice for you.' Having healed his wounds, he made him to pass from that place. The blessed man went in the desert and fed himself upon roots. He used to come every Sunday to his place and partake of the Holy Offering.

A certain paralyzed man wished to go to him to be healed. Immediately, his legs touched the back of the ass which he was going to ride, through his faith only they were healed, even before the holy man offered up even a prayer on his behalf.

On one occasion the holy man John begged the priest who ministered to him to bring him a few palm leaves. The priest brought them to him, and the blessed man plaited them together. The priest took some of the plaits and made a girth of them for his ass. There was a certain paralytic who wished to go to the blessed man and be healed. The paralyzed entreated the priest to carry him to the blessed man. The priest sat him upon the ass. Immediately his legs touched the girth on the back of the ass, the girth that the blessed John plaited. Through his faith only, his legs were healed, before the holy man had offered up even a prayer on his behalf. (Such is the story as told in another manuscript.) On another occasion he sent a gift (or blessing) to those who were ill, and immediately they had tasted it they were healed of their sicknesses.

Once, it was revealed to him that some of the brethren of his monasteries were not upright in their lives and works. He wrote an epistle to them all accusing the elders of being negligent, and the brethren of running after exaltation. It was known that this really was so. He wrote to the fathers who were neglectful, and who held the salvation of the brethren lightly. He told the others to amend their lives, and to make their deeds better. He revealed to them also that a reward or penalty was laid up for both groups of them. He called the others to perfection in the spiritual life and its works. He reminded them that they must neglect the things that are visible, and follow those that are invisible, for it is time that we showed out the manner of our life and its

works. It is meet that we should not pass our lives as children and youths, but we must draw near to the perfection of knowledge. We must take up our stand upon the majesty of its glory."

These and other things did our father, the holy man Apollo, relate to us concerning the blessed John. We marveled at their greatness. We have not written them all down, not because they were not true, but because of the want of faith of various men. We ourselves believe them to be true. We are fully persuaded that they are so, as those who related to us these wonderful things of his life and deeds had certainly seen them with their own eyes. These men were both numerous and great. Here end the triumphs of Abba John and Apollo who dwelt in the desert.

12. The Triumphs of Abba Paphnutius

WE SAW THE PLACE OF THE DWELLING of the blessed Paphnutius, the great and glorious man who departed from this world, and brought his life to a close but a very short time before in the district of Herakleia, which is in the Thebaid. Many men relate very many mighty things concerning this man. After he had performed great spiritual deeds, he entreated God to inform him which of the saints whose lives had been pleasing to Him he resembled. An angel appeared to him, saying, "You are like such and such a singer who lives in such and such a city." Then the blessed man made his way to the singer with great zeal and diligence, and having found him, he asked him about his deeds, and made enquiries concerning his life. The singer made answer to him, telling him at the same time what was actually the truth, saying, "I am a sinner, and a miserable wretch, and a whoremonger, and it is only a short time ago since I gave up a life of theft and became as I am." When Paphnutius enquired of him, "What have you done which is good?" He made answer to him, saying, "I did not know that I had ever done anything good except once. When I was a thief I saw a certain virgin of God being forced by thieves, and she was nearly seduced, and I rescued her from them and carried her by night to the city.

On another occasion I found a beautiful woman wandering about in the desert, who had fled from the men of the company of the general and counselor because of a debt for taxes which her husband had incurred. She was crying to herself because of her troubles, and because of being compelled to roam and wander in the desert. When I saw her I asked her the cause of her weeping. She answered me, saying, 'My lord, do not ask me questions, and do not make enquiries about a miserable woman like myself. Instead, take me

to be your handmaiden, and carry me to wherever you please. My husband owes a debt of three hundred darics for taxes to the governor. Behold, during the whole of the past two years he had been scourged and kept in prison. My three beloved children had been sold into slavery. I myself have been seized on several occasions, carried off and beaten cruelly. I finally escaped, fled, and have been cast away from one place to another. I am here wandering around this desert. Behold, for the last three days I have not eaten anything whatsoever.' I had compassion upon the woman, took her to my cave, gave to her three hundred dinars, and then carried her off to the city so that she might be able to free herself, and to redeem her children and her husband."

Then the blessed Paphnutius answered him, saying, "I do not know in myself that any such thing as this had been done by me. You must have heard concerning my labors or that I am famous, for I have never passed my life in negligence. God revealed to me concerning you and told me that you were not inferior to me in your works. Since the care God had for you is not small, even as He Himself had shown me, O brother. Do not neglect yourself as if you were of no account." Immediately the singer cast away from him the reed pipe that he was holding in his hands, and abandoned the songs that he used to sing to cheer the workmen. He turned to the sweet words of the Holy Spirit, clung to Paphnutius, and departed to the desert. Having passed three years in strenuous labor there he brought to an end the period of his life with praises and prayers, and with works of ascetic excellence. He travelled the road of the heavenly beings. He was numbered among the company of the holy ones, among the army of the righteous, and went to his rest.

Having dispatched this man to God with good and glorious works, and since he had added excellence to his own labors, Paphnutius asked God again to inform him which of the saints he resembled. And again a divine voice came to him, and said, "You are like a certain chief of a village which is near you." Immediately Paphnutius went down there and when he had knocked at the door, the master of the house came near, as he was accustomed, to receive strangers, he opened the door, brought him inside, washed his feet, and set a table before him and entreated him to eat. The blessed man asked him, saying, "Tell me, O man, what fair deeds and actions you do, for, according to what God has made known to me, you art more excellent than many monks." Then the man said to him about himself, "I am a sinner, and I am not worthy of the heaven of the monks." The blessed man having made enquiries of him persistently, the man answered and said to him, "I do not feel constrained overmuch to relate to you the history of my deeds, but since you had said, 'I have been sent by God,' I will show you what I have done. Behold, for the last

thirty years I have kept myself away from my wife, and three times only have I had intercourse with her. I have three children by her, and they minister to my affairs. But to this very day I have never ceased to receive strangers, and no man in my village can boast that he had excelled me in hospitality to strangers. No poor man or stranger had ever departed from me with an empty hand, or without having been suitably supplied by me with provisions for the way. I have never neglected to comfort the poor man who had been brought low with my gifts. I have never accepted the person of my son in judgment. The possessions of strangers have never entered my house. No strife had ever taken place near me that I have not ended peacefully. The members of my house have never been blamed for the committal of abominable deeds, and my flocks and herds have never drawn near to the fruits of strangers. I have never sowed my fields except for the poor. I have set them aside for the pleasure of every man, and I have gathered in that which remained over. I have never allowed the poor man to be carried away by the rich man by force. I have never made a man to grieve in all my life. I have never passed a decree of wickedness upon any man. These, according to the will of God, I know within myself that I have done."

When the blessed Paphnutius heard the glorious character of the life and works of the man, he kissed his head, and said to him, "'May the Lord bless you out of Zion, and may you look upon the prosperity of Jerusalem!' For these things you had performed well, but you are lacking one of the prime virtues, that is to say, the knowledge of the wisdom of God, which you will not be able to acquire without any labor. A man must deny the world and himself, take up the Cross of our Lord, and follow Him." When that man heard these things, immediately, without taking counsel with the children of his house, he clung to the blessed man, and went out with him to the mountain. When they had come to the bank of the river, they found no boat. The blessed Paphnutius commanded that they should pass over it on foot, a thing that no man had ever done at this place because of the depth of the stream. As they were passing over at that place, the water reached up to their backs. When they had passed over, Paphnutius left him at the place in that country where he, the first one, went to his rest and completed his life.

When he had gone from him, Paphnutius entreated God that he might see what was the most excellent of these. After the period of three years, he saw angels carrying the soul of that man up to heaven, praising God, and saying, "Blessed is the man in whom You had pleasure, and whom You bring to dwell in Your habitation." The righteous were also returning answer, and saying, "May the peace of those who love Your law increase." Paphnutius knew that that man had filled full his measure.

When he continued in prayer and fasted for very long periods, he prayed to God and again entreated Him to show him which of the saints he resembled. The Divine Voice said to him, "You are like a merchant who is seeking beautiful pearls. But arise, and make no long tarrying, for you shall meet a man who resembles you." So the blessed man went down from the mountain, and he saw a certain God fearing Alexandrian merchant, who was trafficking with twenty thousand pieces of gold and three ships. That man had come down from the upper part of the Thebaid. He used to give all his possessions and merchandise to the poor, and the brethren and monks. He and his household used to take up ten sacks of garden herbs to the blessed man every year. When the blessed Paphnutius saw him, he said to him, "What does this mean, O my beloved?" The merchant said to him, "The fruits of my trafficking are for the relief of the righteous, and I offer them to God." The blessed man replied, "Why are you not honored by the same name as that which we have?" The merchant answered, saying, "I confess that I have great anxiety so to be called." The blessed man said to him, "How long will you occupy yourself with such earthly things, and not drawing near the heavenly things? Leave, even this very moment, these things to others. Cling to Christ in the things that are more excellent, for after a little you shall depart to God."

Then the merchant, joyfully, commanded the members of his household to distribute the remainder of his possessions among the poor. He went up the mountain, and confined himself to that place in which the two men had been crowned. He awaited God with prayers, tears, and abundant fasting. After a short time, he left his corruptible body, and became a son of the city of the heavenly beings. Since Paphnutius had escorted this man also to heaven, he asked for death for himself also. After the manner of one who was not able to live the life of the upright and glorious deeds that are exalted in majesty; and an angel stood by his side, saying, "Come now, O blessed old man. Take your rest in the everlasting tabernacles that God had prepared for the blessed, who stand there waiting to receive you, that is to say, the Prophets in their companies, the Apostles in their grades; these are they whom you resemble. I did not reveal this to you earlier, lest through being exalted overmuch you might lose some of your honor." After these words Paphnutius lived one day only. When all the things that he had done had been narrated in the presence of the elders who had come to him through a revelation, he delivered up his soul. Those same priests, after his death, plainly saw him carried upwards with the companies of the saints, and with angels who were praising God. Here ends the triumphs of Paphnutius.

13. The Triumphs of the Blessed Eulogius

WE SAW ANOTHER MIGHTY ELDER whose name was Eulogius. He entreated God to give him at the time when he was about to offer up the Offering, such knowledge that he might know the mind of every one of the monks who drew near to partake of the Holy Sacraments. On several occasions this man saw monks prepared to draw near to the Holy and Glorious Sacraments, and restrained them, saying, "How is it that you dare to draw near to the Holy Sacraments seeing that you have evil minds?" To another of them he said, "This night you had pondered in your mind about filthy fornication." To another he said, "You had thought in your mind that whether a man is righteous or wicked there is nothing to hinder you from drawing near to the goodness of God." To another he said, "You had doubt in your mind whether the Holy Sacraments are able to sanctify those who draw near to them. Therefore keep away for a little from the Holy Sacraments, and repent with all your soul, so that you may obtain remission of your sins, and may be held worthy of association with Christ. For if you do not cleanse your thoughts before you draw near to them you will be unable to obtain forgiveness." Here ends the triumph of Eulogius.

14. The Triumphs of Isidore

WE SAW THE MONASTERY OF THE BLESSED ISIDORE in the Thebaid. It was a strong building with a high brick wall. There, thousands of monks dwelt. There was a well, a garden, and whatever was required for the food of its inhabitants. None of the monks ever went out of the monastery. They had a certain elder as a doorkeeper who would neither permit any man to depart, nor to come in, except him who had determined in his mind to remain there until the day of his death, and never to leave. This doorkeeper had a small house by the side of the gate where he received such strangers as came by night, and in the morning, he would give them a blessing (i.e. a gift) and dismiss them in peace. There were two elders who used to go outside the building to sell the work of the brethren, and to bring in such things as were required by them. The elder who was always at the door was in the habit of saying that all the monks who dwelt within the building were so holy that all of them could work miracles. He used to say also that it was impossible for any one of them to fall into sickness before the day of his departure from the world. He also said that whenever the end of any of them was coming he knew it beforehand,

told all the brethren about it, and then he lay down and died. Here ends the triumph of Isidore.

15. The Triumphs of Dioscurus

WE SAW ANOTHER HOLY MAN IN THE THEBAID, whose name was Dioscurus. He was the Abba of a hundred monks. When the monks were about to draw near to the gracious Sacraments, he would say to them, "Perhaps there is a man among you who dares to draw near to the Holy Sacraments, in whose mind the lust for women has risen up during the night. The nocturnal pollution that is not of the thoughts is a customary, though involuntary emission. It is not the result of desire, for it is a natural result, and is derived from the actual substance of the body. Therefore we are not guilty of sin. On the other hand, the filthy vision proceeds from the mind and the evil desire is the cause of the same." Dioscurus used to say, "It is right that a monk should be superior to the law of nature, and that the smallest impurity should not be in his body. He should humble himself in such a way, that owing to much fasting, the physical matter of the body may not be able to increase. It is not right for a monk to approach lusts, for if he does, in what respect are we superior to the men of this world whom we see in several cases curbing their lusts, either for the sake of the health of the body, or for other befitting causes? How much more, then, is it fitting for a monk to take care concerning the health of his mind, his soul, and his spirit?" Here ends the triumph of Dioscurus.

16. The Triumph of Abba Copres and of the Blessed Petarpemotis

WE SAW ANOTHER HOLY MAN whose name was Copres, who dwelt in the desert, and was the archimandrite of fifty men. He used to perform many mighty deeds. He could cure many sicknesses and diseases of various kinds. He could cast out devils, and drove away evil spirits. He did many other wonderful works, some of which we saw with our own eyes. When he saw us, he saluted us, prayed over us, washed our feet, and began to ask us questions about the world and its affairs. We entreated him to relate to us the story of his life and works first of all, how had it happened that God gave him such gifts, and by what kind of works he had become worthy of the same. In the mind of the blessed man pride did not exist even to the smallest degree. He began to tell us about his own life and works. He also told us about those

great, wonderful, and perfect fathers, the examples of whose lives and works he strove both to imitate and to emulate.

PETARPEMOTIS

HE ANSWERED US, SAYING, "O MY SONS! My manner of life and my mourning are not to be compared with those of the early fathers. For there was here before me a certain man, named Petarpemotis, who was first and chief of all the monks dwelling in this place. It was he who first made manifest (i.e. wore) this garb, and invented it. Formerly he had been a thief, and a plunderer of the tombs of the heathen. He had a great reputation for committing wickedness of every kind connected with robbery and theft. But the following matter was the cause of his finding life. Once he went to rob the religious house of a certain blessed woman who dwelt in chastity. Without knowing it he found himself on the roof of her house. He was unable to enter her house and plunder it, because the roofs of the house were flat and had no rain water pipes leading inside, for there is no rain in the Thebaid. There was no place on the roof where he could enter the house, or leave it again. He was neither able to descend nor to escape. He was obliged to stay there until the morning, and wondered meanwhile in his mind what he should do until the daylight came. While he was there he sank into a light sleep, and he saw an angel in the form of a man saying to him, 'Do not devote such close attention, diligence, and watching to your life of thievery. If you wish to change your wickedness into a life of good deeds you must serve with the service of angels before Christ the King. You shall receive from Him this power and authority.' Immediately when he heard these things he received them from him with gladness. He who had appeared to him in the form of an angel showed him a company of monks, and commanded his dominion over them.

When he woke up from his slumber, he saw the nun standing before him, and saying, 'O man, what are you doing here? What is your story? When did you come? Who are you?' He said, 'I do not know, but I beseech you to show me the church.' When she had shown him the church, he went and fell down before the feet of the elders, and entreated them to become a Christian, so he might find an occasion for repentance. When the elders knew who he was, they marveled, and began to admonish him that from that moment he must not be a slayer of men. He begged them that he might be allowed to learn the Psalms. When he learned three verses of the first Psalm, he said, 'These are sufficient for me to learn.' He tarried with the elders for three days. Finally he went away from them, and departed into the desert. When

he had lived there for five weeks without bread, a man came to him carrying bread and water. He entreated him to eat and to refresh himself. Petarpemotis lived there for three years in prayer and tears. He fed himself on the roots from the desert, and wandered about eating them. After three years he returned to the church, and repeated before the fathers the belief and all the doctrine of the Church. Although he never learned letters, he could repeat the Scriptures by heart. The elders marveled at him and wondered how a man of his kind could have attained such a degree of learning and asceticism. They gave him further light in respect of speech and learning. When they baptized him, they entreated him to remain with them. He tarried with them for seven more days. Then he went away and departed to the desert, where he lived for a further period of seven years. This blessed man was held worthy of a continual supply of the gift of bread, which was found every Sunday in his pillow. When he prayed and had given thanks, he would partake of it. Then he would fast again until the following Sunday without suffering in any way.

He returned from that wilderness with works of spiritual excellence. He departed from the desert, and made manifest his rule of abstinence and self-denial. He incited many to follow after him. There drew near to him a certain young man who entreated him to become his disciple. Having received him, Petarpemotis dressed him in the way that he himself was dressed, which was a shirt with short sleeves, and an outer garment. He placed a cowl upon his head, and tied a napkin about his loins. He showed him the way and the rules of a life of mourning. He trained him in the life and deeds of the monks, and he placed a cape on his shoulders.

The custom of the blessed man was as follows. When a Christian died he remained with him the whole night long in vigil and prayer. He would reverently dress him and bury him. When that disciple saw him dressing the deceased Christians in this way, he said to him, 'Will you also dress me in this manner when I die, O master?' He replied, 'I will dress you in this fashion, and will wrap you in a shroud until you shall say to me, I have enough.' After no great length of time that disciple died, and the words of his master were indeed fulfilled. Petarpemotis dressed him reverently in the fear of God, as was right, and asked in a loud voice before all those who were standing there, 'Have I dressed you well, O my son, or do you lack anything?' The dead man sent out a voice, heard by all, saying, 'You have dressed me, O my father. You have fulfilled your promise, and have completed your undertaking.' Wonder laid hold upon all those who were standing there, and they glorified God. The blessed man departed into the desert according to his custom, and went that he might occupy himself in his daily round of devotion, even as a man who

flees from vainglory.

After these things he went away from the desert and departed to work for the brethren who were his disciples, and who were sick. One of these was near to death, and God had revealed to him the day where he would pass away was near, and the village was far away. Because he did not wish to enter that village by night (for he suspected evil), and because he would fulfill the word of our Lord, which said, 'Walk in the light while you have the light, and he who walks in the light shall not be tripped up' when he saw that the day was declining, he said to the sun, 'Tarry on the path of your course, and wait for me a short time until I can come to the village.' The sun stood still for a while, did not go down, and remained in its place. It neither set nor went to rest until Petarpemotis had entered the village. This appearance was known to all those who dwelt in the village. They all ran, stood still, and gazed for a long time at the sun, which was not setting. When they saw Petarpemotis coming from the desert, they asked him, 'What is the meaning of the sign of this sun of not going down?' He said to them, 'Do you not remember the word of our Lord which said, 'If you have faith like to a grain of mustard seed, you shall work miracles which shall be greater and more excellent than these?' When they heard these things, great fear laid on them. They knew immediately that it was he who had held back the sun. Large number of them remained with him and became his disciples.

He went into the house of one of his disciples who had been sick, and found that he was dead. He drew near to the bier where the dead man was lying, prayed, kissed him, and said to him, 'Do you desire to depart to God now, O my son, or would you remain alive in the body?' The dead man sat up, and answered, saying, 'It is better for me to leave the body that I may be with Christ. I have no desire to live in the body.' The blessed man said to him, 'Then die in peace, my son, and make entreaty before God on my behalf that you may go to Him.' After the blessed man had said these words, the man died on his bier. Fear fell upon all those who were standing there, and they said, 'Assuredly this is a man of God.' When the blessed man had dressed him carefully, he kept vigil the whole night by him, prayed, sang Psalms, and then he buried him in a proper manner.

Petarpemotis went and visited another brother who was sick. He saw that he was dying with difficulty, and that he was troubled in his mind. His mind was rebuking him, and his conscience was pricking him because of his wickedness. The blessed man said to him, 'How can you go to God seeing that you are prepared to carry with you the accusation of neglect of your works, meaning, lax intentions in respect of your manner of life?' That brother begged

and entreated him to pray to God on his behalf, so he might be given a little longer life to amend his ways and deeds. Petarpemotis answered him, saying, 'That your life had come to an end you ask for time for repentance! What had you been doing all your life? Were you not able to heal your blemishes? Yet you had added others to your negligence!' But the man made more supplications begging and entreating him to pray that he might rise up again from his bed of sickness. Petarpemotis said to him, 'If you will not add sins to your sins, but will seek with all your soul to repent, I will entreat God on your behalf. God is good and merciful. Ask Him to grant you time and life that you may pay back all that you owed.' When Petarpemotis prayed, he said to him, 'God has granted you to live in the body for three more years, but only through earnest supplication.' He took him by the hand, raised him up from his sickness immediately, led him away with him and carried him off to the desert, where he lived with him for three years.

When the three years ended, he brought him back to his village, and set him before God, not as an ordinary man, but as a messenger who had been chosen by God. They all marveled at his works. When the brethren were gathered around him, Petarpemotis set that brother in the midst, and he narrated to them the doctrine of life the whole night. Suddenly he sank into a slumber, and departed from this life to our Lord. The blessed man dressed him for burial, and accompanied him to the grave with prayers.

They used to mention about many wonderful works that were performed by Petarpemotis. They testified that on several occasions he walked on the water. Besides this, he was once found in an upper chamber with the brethren, although the doors had been shut, for he had come in to them in the air by the power of angels. They also mentioned that he obtained from God everything he asked for. He also had the power to go wherever and whenever he pleased, without trouble. The blessed Petarpemotis once related to the brethren the following story. On one occasion, he had gone out from the desert, and saw in his dream as if he had been taken up into heaven. There he saw the good things that were prepared for the monks. He also saw what the mouth of man could not describe, or utter. He also said, 'I saw Paradise with the eyes of this body, and saw there the many multitudes of the saints. I tasted the fruits of Paradise.' He produced a proof of his assertion, that he might show that the things, which he said were true. He gave his disciples to eat of the fruit of a great, marvelous, and extraordinarily large fig tree, which possessed an odor that was different from any other smell in the world."

While this holy man Copres was relating to us all these things concerning Petarpemotis, he said, "I have seen in my youth portions of that fig tree in

the hands of his disciples. I kissed them, and wondered at its odor. The tree remained with his disciples for many years as a manifestation of the truth of his words to many. For it was great beyond measure, and it had such wonderful properties that any sick person who inhaled its odor was immediately healed of his sickness.

They say that at the beginning of his going into the desert, when he had not tasted food of any kind for five weeks, he found a man in the parched desert carrying bread and water, who begged him to eat. When he had done so he removed himself from him. On another occasion, the Evil showed him some fine gold which in quantity surpassed the treasures of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He answered and said to the Evil, 'May you and your money go to hell.'

These and similar great things were, according to what they said, performed by Abba Petarpemotis. They also spoke of other things before us, which if written the world could not contain. According to what these men said, Abba Petarpemotis spoke to us, saying, "If we who are little people perform things which are little, like to ourselves, that is to say, if we heal the halt and the blind, which selfsame things the physicians do by means of their art, in what consists the greatness?" While Copres the elder was relating these things to us, one of us slumbered and fell into a sleep. This man did not believe the things that he heard the blessed man say. Having fallen asleep, he saw a marvelous book. The book was laid upon the knees of this elder, and was written wholly in gold. Above it stood an old man who said to him in a very threatening manner, "Did you not hear well what was being said that you did fall asleep?" Immediately, the man awoke from his sleep, and told us in the Greek tongue what he had seen.

COPRES

WHILE OUR BROTHER WAS RELATING HIS DREAM TO US, a certain villager was found to be standing there before him, bearing on his shoulders a bucket of sand. He was waiting there to hear the end of his story. We begged him to tell us why he was carrying the sand, why he stood there, and what he wanted. Abba Copres answered us, saying, "My sons, it is not seemly for us to boast. It is fitting that we should declare before you the triumphs of the fathers, so that we may not be unduly exalted in our minds, and so lose our reward. Nevertheless, because of the earnestness, and for the sake of the welfare of you who have come to us from a distance, we will not deprive you of benefit. We will relate before your brotherhood whatever God had wrought by our hands.

Once, the land around us produced nothing. It was with the greatest difficulty that the villagers who owned it were able to gather from it as much again as they sowed. The worms were produced in the ears and they destroyed all their harvest. Some of those men were converted by us, and begged us to pray for their harvest. We said to them, 'If you have faith in God even this desert sand shall bring out crops for you.' Without any doubt, they filled their bosoms with the sand that is trodden under our feet, and entreated us to bless it. When we prayed that it might be to them even according to their faith, they went and mixed it with the wheat and sowed it in their fields. Immediately their land produced abundant crops, larger than the crops obtained from the other lands in Egypt. Thus it became the custom for them to bring sand each year, and to trouble us to bless it."

He also related to us a certain wonderful thing, which the Lord had wrought for us when large numbers of the brethren were gathered. He said, "Once, I went down to the city, and found there a certain Manichean who was leading the multitudes into error. I was unable to rebuke and convince him openly. I turned towards the multitudes, and said to them, 'Kindle a large fire, and let the two of us go into it when it is burning brightly. He who remains in the fire without being burnt shall be the man who possesses the true faith.' When this had been done, the crowd had lit a fire with ready zeal. I urged the Manichean to go with me into it. He said, 'Let each of us go in by himself. It is, moreover, necessary that you should be the first because you did give the command to light the fire.' Then, having made upon myself the sign of the Cross in the Name of Jesus Christ, I went into the fire, and was unharmed, for the flame parted asunder on this side and on that. It vexed me in no way. When I had remained in the fire for half an hour, and the multitudes had seen the wonderful thing, they cried out, gave thanks to God, and compelled the Manichean to go into the fire. When, because of his fear, he was unwilling to go into it, the crowd took him, and pushed him into the fire. He was wholly consumed. They took me, escorted me to the church, and ascribed praise to God.

On another occasion, when I was passing by a certain heathen temple, the heathen were offering up sacrifices to their idols. I said to them, 'Why do you who are rational beings offer up sacrifices to things which are dumb? Are you of your own will dumb that you sacrifice to dumb things?' They admitted that what I said was good, came after me, and believed in Christ.

Moreover, we had a garden in a certain neighboring place, which was intended for the pleasure of the brethren who came to us from afar off. A certain poor man used to work in it. One of the heathen went into the garden

and stole some vegetables and departed. He was not able to cook them, for although he kept the fire burning under the saucepan for three hours they remained in the same state as when they were taken from the garden. Additionally, the water would not boil! When the man came to his senses he took the vegetables and brought them to us. He begged that he might be forgiven the offence, and to become a Christian. He actually became one. On that very day certain brethren came to us from a distance, and it is probable that those vegetables were brought on their account, so that they might enjoy them. When we had tasted them, we gave thanks to our Lord, for we had a twofold joy, first, because of the redemption of the soul of the man who had stolen them, and secondly, because the visiting brethren enjoyed them."

These and other wonderful things did our holy father Copres relate to us. When he had made us rest, he took us into his garden and showed us the palms and other fruit trees which Copres had planted with his own hands for the encouragement of those men who believed in Christ, and to whom he had said that this desert was able to bring out fruit for those who believed in God. He said, "When I saw that they had sown sand, and that their crops were abundant, I also planted this garden for the enjoyment of the brethren, and it has come to its present state of perfection." Here end the triumphs of Copres and Petarpemotis.

17. The Triumphs of Abba Hor, Isaiah, Paul, and Nopi

ON A CERTAIN OCCASION ABBA HOR, ISAIAH, AND PAUL met by chance by the side of a great river. All three were chaste and perfect ascetics. They were going to visit a certain great confessor whose name was Nopi, who lived at a place that was three stages distant. They said to each other, "Let each of us show the other his triumphs, in what way, and to what extent he is, on account of his deeds, honored by God." Abba Hor said to them, "I beg God for this gift that we may journey to the place in that country by the might of the Holy Spirit, without any labor on our part." After he prayed, immediately, a boat was found to be ready, and a wind favorable for the journey. They sailed up against the stream, and in a short time found themselves at that place.

When they had gone up from the river, Isaiah said to them, "O my beloved, would it not be a greater display of the power of God if that man whom we are going to see were to come to us and were to describe to each of us his life and works?" Paul said to them, "God has revealed to me that after three days He will take him, and that the man whom we are going to see will

depart from this world into eternal life.” When they journeyed onwards a short distance from that place, the man himself met and saluted them. Paul said to him, “Brother, explain to us your manner of life and works, for the day after tomorrow you will go to God.” Abba Nopi said to them, “Blessed is God, Who has revealed these things to me, and has shown me concerning your coming and concerning your life and works.” When he had described the upright dealings of each one of them, how they lived, how they labored, he began to describe his own life and works. He spoke thus, “Since the day I confessed the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and God, no falsehood whatever had gone out from my mouth on earth. I have never taken any earthly thing, for an angel has fed me each day with heavenly food. In my heart I have never had any bothering desire that is not of God. God has not hidden from me any honorable and glorious thing. I have never been deprived of, or lacked the light of mine eyes. I have never gone to sleep in the daytime. I have never, during the night season, rested from making supplication to God. The angel of God had accompanied me always and has shown me the might of the world, which is to come. His light has never gone out in my mind. Every request I made to God I have received straightaway. At all times I have seen myriads of angels standing before God. I have seen the companies of the saints. I have seen the congregations of the martyrs. I have seen the triumphs of the monks who mourn. I have seen the works of the solitary brethren, and the congregations of the righteous. I have seen all creatures glorifying God. I have seen Satan delivered over to the burning fire. I have also seen the satanic angels suffering torments, and the righteous ones enjoying the unceasing happiness.”

Having told us these things, and many others, he delivered up his soul on the third day. Immediately the angels and the armies of the martyrs received it, and took it up into heaven. We saw them singing praises and heard them. Here ends the triumphs of Abba Hor, Isaiah, Paul, and Nopi, the Confessors.

18. The Triumph of Evagrius

WE ALSO SAW EVAGRIUS, who was a man of great ability and learning. He, through the experience of the matters that passed over him, had acquired the discernment of good thoughts. He had on several occasions gone down to the city of Alexandria and shut the mouths of the heathen philosophers. He commanded the brethren who were with us not to drink their fill of water, because devils were always found in the places where there were fountains of

water, and according to the word of our Lord, Who said, "When the evil spirit had gone out from a man, it departs and wanders about in the places wherein there is no water seeking rest, which it does find." He spoke to us many things concerning the labors of ascetic excellence. He confirmed our souls in the faith. Many of the monks neither ate bread nor fruit, but bitter herbs and vegetables soaked in vinegar. Some of them never slept at all during the night, but, either sitting up or standing, they continued to pray until the morning. Here ends the triumph of Evagrius.

19. The Triumph of Pithyrion

WE SAW IN THE THEBAID A HIGH MOUNTAIN next to the river. It was an exceedingly terrible mountain with high barren peaks. In its caves many monks dwelt. Among these men, was Abba Pithyrion, a disciple of the holy man Anthony. He was the third who received that place from Anthony. He used to perform many mighty deeds, and to carry on the persecution of devils openly. Since he was the man who had received the place of the blessed and great man Anthony, and of his disciple Ammonius, he received also the inheritance of his labors. Pithyrion spoke many things, and discoursed with power, especially on the faculty of discerning spirits, saying, "There are certain devils which cling to the passions. On several occasions they turn our good desires into evil. Therefore, O my sons, those of you who wish to drive away devils must first of all bring into subjection your lusts. A man must vanquish not only every lust, but also he must drive away the devil. It is right that you should overcome your lusts little by little, so that in the same way you may drive away the devils, which appear to you. There is a devil that belongs to a wasteful and dissolute life. He, who is able to conquer the desire, is also able to drive away that devil." This man used to eat twice a week, on Sunday and on Thursday. His food consisted of a little flour and some water baked into a thin cake. He was unable to eat anything else. This was his nature. Here ends the triumph of Pithyrion.

20. The Triumph of the Blessed Fathers

WE SAW OTHER FATHERS AND MONKS IN SEVERAL PLACES throughout Egypt who used to work mighty deeds and miracles. They were so numerous that we cannot mention them all. We therefore narrate few things

out of many. For what shall we say of the upper part of the Thebaid, namely that which is near Syene. There, many wonderful men and countless monks lived. They lead lives, which are wholly beyond the nature of ordinary men. For at the present time they raise the dead, and like Peter, walk upon the water. Everything that our Redeemer performed, by His saints, is performed by these holy men. Because of the great danger that we should run of thieves and barbarians falling upon us, we did not dare to go up the Nile any further to the south than Lycos. Therefore we could not see the holy men who were there. We were not able to know even the fathers of whom we have spoken above without toil and tribulation. It was only with the greatest difficulty that we were able to narrate their histories, for in order to do this we had to suffer much. We were within very little of having to endure many tribulations. At length, we were worthy to see these men. For on seven occasions we were delivered, and on the eighth, the evil came not near to us, because, at all times, God protected us.

On the first occasion we nearly perished of hunger and thirst whilst we were wandering about in the desert without food for five days and five nights. On the second occasion, we fell among savage and rugged mountains until our feet got pierced with the stones. We suffered very great pain, and nearly had to yield up our souls. On the third occasion we sank in the mud several times up to our backs, and there was no-one to help us. We cried out the words of the blessed David, "Save me, O God, for the waters have come even to my soul, I have sunk into a dark abyss, wherein is no place on which to stand. Save me from the mire that I sink not." On the fourth occasion a flood of many waters burst upon us at the period of the inundation of the Nile. We walked around in the water, sank down very nearly to the nostrils of the animal which we rode, and we cried out, saying, "Do not drown us, O Lord, in a whirlpool of waters. Do not let the abyss swallow us up. Do not let the pit close its mouth over us." On the fifth occasion we fell in with some river thieves while we were walking along on the riverbanks to go into the city of Dekapolis. They pursued us and sought to capture us, until very little breath was left in our nostrils. They chased us for a distance of ten miles. On the sixth occasion we were sailing on the Nile when the boat capsized and sank under us. On the seventh occasion we were arriving at Lake Mareotis, and we were cast up on a small desert island, where the papyrus plant grows. We passed there three whole days and nights under the open sky in severe cold and with the rain falling upon us. It was the day of the Epiphany.

The story of the eighth occasion may be superfluous, but it is helpful. When we were going to Nitria we passed a great deep place in one of the

fields, which was full of water. After the waters had run off the fields several crocodiles remained there. Three very large crocodiles were stretched out on the edge of the pool, and we drew near to them that we might see them. We thought they were dead. They ran after us very fast, and we cried out with a loud voice, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, spare our souls." The crocodiles, as if they had been driven away from us by angels, cast themselves into the water. We made our way to Nitria with all possible haste. As we went, we meditated upon the words of the righteous man Job, who said, "Seven times He shall deliver you from tribulation, and on the eighth, evil shall not draw near to you." Therefore we gave thanks to our Lord, who had redeemed us out of all tribulations. He had manifested to us marvelous revelations by the hands of his believing saints and monks. Here end the triumphs of the Blessed Fathers.

21. The Triumphs of the Monks who were in Nitria

WE CAME TO THE DISTRICT OF NITRIA, where we saw many great disciples who had departed from the world, and some were natives of the country, and some were strangers (i.e. foreigners). They were more excellent in glory than the others, and were emulating each other in the beautiful deeds of strenuousness. They were striving to outstrip each other in their glorious lives and works. Some of them possessed divine vision, and others possessed works of ascetic excellence. As we were coming from the desert, some of them saw us when we were afar off. They met us on the way and some of them brought water, others washed our feet, others washed our garments, and others entreated us to eat. Others called us to the doctrine of glory, while others called us to the vision of divine knowledge. Each one of them wished to help us up to his power to do so. However much a man might speak about their glorious life, it would be impossible to describe its reality. They dwell in a waste place, and their dwellings are remote. They live apart from each other that a man could not be known or readily heard by his fellow. They live in the strictest silence, and are secluded within their cell. On Saturday and Sunday they assemble in the church, and so meet each other. On several occasions many of them have been found dying in their chambers without having been seen by others, except when they assembled for service in the church. Some of them only assembled once every three or four months. Thus they were remote from each other. These monks have much affection both for each other and for the rest of the brethren, for each one of them would be exceedingly anxious to

give up his chamber to any man who wished to seek for grace. Here end the triumphs of the monks who were in Nitria.

22. The Triumph of Ammon the First

THERE WAS IN THE EARLY TIMES IN NITRIA a certain man whose name was Ammon. His soul was seen being taken up to heaven by the blessed Anthony. This man, Ammon, became the chief of the monks who were in Nitria. He belonged to a noble family and his parents were exceedingly rich. They urged him to marry a wife, although he was unwilling to do so. The parents persisted in urging him, so he did so. In the wedding chamber he persuaded the maiden who became his bride to keep her virginity, and he promised to do the same. After a few days he departed to the country of Nitria, the maiden herself called all the members of her household to virginity, and turned her house into a nunnery. The blessed Ammon was living by himself in the country of Nitria. A certain man seized with madness and bound by chains was brought to him. A mad dog had bitten the man too. The madness of the animal entered the man and the man's body was torn by the severe pain. When the blessed man saw that the relatives of the young man were making supplication on his behalf, he said to them, "What are you bringing to me, O men? You are seeking from me what is greater than my power. It lies in your own hands to help and to heal the young man. Go and restore the value of the widow's bull that you slew secretly. Your son shall be given back to you healed." Then they, being rebuked, fulfilled his commandment with gladness. He prayed immediately, and their son was healed.

Once, certain people came to visit the blessed Ammon. As he learned their mind, he said to them, "Bring to me a large potter's vessel, so that there may be an abundance of water for the people who come here." Although they promised him that they would do so, one of them, as soon as he returned to his village, took counsel and said to his companion, "I am not going to carry the potter's vessel on my camel and kill it." When the other man heard this, he saddled his ass, and carried the vessel to the holy man with great labor. The blessed Ammon said to the man before he could speak, "What is this? Behold, your friend's camel died while you were coming here." When the man returned he found that the camel had been killed by wolves. This man worked many other miracles. Here ends the triumph of Ammon.

23. The Triumph of Another Ammon who was in Nitria

WE ALSO SAW THERE A CERTAIN ABBA whose name also was Ammon, and he possessed a number of small houses which were exceedingly beautiful, and a courtyard, and a well of water, and other things for use. A certain brother, who wished earnestly to obtain mercy, came to him, and said to the blessed man, "Build me a little house in which I may dwell." The holy man, like one who was going out to do this, ordered him not to depart from these chambers until he could find one which would be convenient for him. He left to him everything he had, together with the chambers, and went and shut himself up in a house which was far away from that place. If the brethren who came to him seeking to have mercy shown to them were many, he would assemble the whole brotherhood, and tell one to draw water, and another to bring bricks, and a house for them would be completed in a day. The brethren would invite those who were ready to inhabit the chambers to refresh themselves in the church, and whilst they were resting there he would fill his cloak, and baskets also, with bread and with other things which they would want to make use of, and would carry them to the new house, and it was not known to any man that he was the source of the gifts of each one of them. At evening the brethren who were ready to take up their abode in these new chambers would come there, and would find ready before them whatsoever they required. Here ends the triumph of the other Ammon.

24. The Triumph of Didymus

WE SAW THERE, ANOTHER BLESSED MAN NAMED DIDYMU. He was very advanced in years. His countenance was beautiful. He used to kill scorpions and other venomous reptiles with his feet, which no other man dared to do. Here ends the triumph of Didymus.

25. The Triumph of Chronius

WE SAW ANOTHER BROTHER AMONG THE MONKS named Chronius. He had arrived at a good old age. He was about one hundred and ten years of age. He was one of the first men who were contemporary with Abba Anthony. He comforted us greatly and admonished us by his humility, which he had preserved even in his old age. Here ends the triumph of Chronius.

26. The Triumph of Three Brethren

WE SAW THERE, THREE BRETHREN WHO WERE LEARNED in speech and glorious in their lives and deeds. Because of their splendid works they were about to be raised to the grade of the episcopate. They had cut off their ears in the fear of God. Although they had done this with great boldness, the object with which they had done it was a good one, for they wished that no man might vex them. Here end the triumphs of three brethren.

27. The Triumph of Philemon

WE SAW THERE A CERTAIN ELDER NAMED PHILEMON who was exceedingly holy and humble. He was constantly seeing revelations. When this man was offering to God the service due to him, he saw an angel standing at the right hand of the altar. He used to write and set down in a book the names of those brethren who drew near to the Gift of Grace. He took care that the names of those who did not come to the congregation were erased. Such men, after three days, died. On several occasions the devils beat this man, and brought so many sicknesses upon him that he was neither able to stand by the altar, nor even to offer up the Offering. An angel came and took him by the hand. Immediately he received strength. The angel made him to stand up healed before the altar. The brethren saw the scars made by his beatings, and marveled. Here ends the triumph of Philemon.

28. The Triumph of John

WE SAW ANOTHER BLESSED MAN WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN. He was an Abba of the monks in the city of Dikpolis. The grace clung to him even as to Abraham. His beard flowed down like that of Aaron. He worked mighty deeds and cures. He healed those who were afflicted with gout, and were paralytics. Here ends the triumph of John.

29. The Triumph of Serapion

WE SAW IN THE REGIONS OF ARSINOITES A CERTAIN ELDER named Serapion. He was the father of all the monasteries, and the head of numerous

brotherhoods that contained about ten thousand men. He took the greatest care in providing for the wants of all the brethren. In the season of harvest he would make those who were hired from year to year bring and to gather for him twelve ardebs of wheat, that is to say, forty bushels. This wheat was to serve for his ministrations to those in want, and to be distributed by his hands. In that district no destitute man might be found. He used to send to the needy in Alexandria the Great their needs. The fathers of whom we have already spoken did not at any time neglect to visit the whole of Egypt. As a result of the toil of the brethren they used to fill boats with food and apparel, and to send them yearly to the poor in Alexandria. The poor and needy who lived around them were a few to exhaust their benevolence. We saw in the region of Babylon and Memphis many great fathers, and many, yes innumerable, monks who were adorned with glorious works before God. Here ends the triumph of Serapion.

30. The Triumphs of Apollo the Lesser

WE SAW THE GRANARIES OF JOSEPH where he collected grain in the time of famine. There was in Thebes, a certain monk named Apollo. Apollo manifested several mighty deeds, and led a life of great works. He was held to be worthy of the office of deacon. His works of spiritual excellence were as glorious and renowned as those of the famous monks of old. During the period of the persecution he made many martyrs by putting courage into the hearts of the confessors of Christ. At length, he himself was seized and put in the prison. The wickedest men among the heathen used to come to him and heap words of hatred and blasphemy upon him. One of those who behaved thus was a certain famous singer who was beloved by all the people. This singer drew near Apollo and reviled him. He called Apollo a wicked man, a liar, a hater of all mankind, and was guilty of death before all the people. Then Apollo said to that singer, "O man, may God have mercy upon you. May the sin, which you have uttered, be not accounted as anything."

When the singer, whose name was Philemon, heard these things he repented at the words of the blessed Apollo. He, the singer, had gone into the place where he was, inflicted pain to himself, gone down immediately to stand before the judge. In the presence of the people, the singer said, "O judge, you are acting wickedly in tormenting the servants of God without a cause. The Christians neither say nor do wicked things. On the contrary, they even bless their enemies." When the judge heard these words, he thought at first that he

had gone mad through his pride, and his madness was speaking. As soon as the judge perceived that he persisted in his words, he answered, saying, "You are mad, O man, and have suddenly become a fool." Philemon made answer to him, saying, "I have not gone mad, O you wicked judge, but I am a Christian. I fear the God of heaven." The judge and all the people wished to persuade him to be quiet by means of flattering speeches. When they saw that he would not yield to them, they applied to him all kinds of wicked tortures. After these things they seized the blessed Apollo, brought him there, and laid many stripes upon him. They scourged him as men scourge those who are wicked and who lead the people into error.

The blessed Apollo spoke to the judge, saying, "I pray to God that you, O judge, and all those who are here present, that you may follow after my error." When the judge heard what the blessed Apollo had said, he commanded that both Apollo and Philemon be burnt by fire in the presence of the multitude. When they were in the blazing fire before the judge, the blessed Apollo cried out with a loud voice to God, so that all the assembly and even the judge himself might hear, saying, "O Lord, do not let the souls which confess You be broken. Make us worthy to see Your deliverance boldly." Immediately, a brilliant cloud, laden with dew, appeared, enveloped these men and quenched the flames of fire. The crowds and the judge marveled, cried out, saying, "One is the God of the Christians."

Certain wicked men made known the things which had taken place to the governor of Alexandria. He chose out from among his bodyguard some savage and merciless men. He sent them for all those who were with the judge, for Philemon, for the blessed Apollo, and for other confessors with them. As they were going along the road, the gracious gift of the Spirit lighted upon Apollo. He began to teach the soldiers. As he spoke they listened to him, repented at his words, and believed in Christ. They all stood up with the prisoners before the throne. As soon as the governor perceived that they could not be changed from the faith of Christ, he commanded that they be cast into the depth of the sea. Since they were drowned by their own will for Christ's sake, this became to them a sign of baptism. The sea refused to keep them, and brought them together near the shore to the spot where they had laid a temple in their honor. In it great miracles were done. Such grace was found with the blessed man. He was greatly honored and heard by Christ in respect of the things he requested in his prayers and supplications.

We ourselves saw the martyrdom where he and those who had testified with him were laid. We prayed and worshipped God. We also touched their dead bodies, for they were not buried yet due to the inundation of the Nile,

but were laying embalmed upon their biers in the Thebaid. For this reason we made ready to insert here the history of the man.

Here end the triumph of Apollo, the monk and martyr and the other histories of the holy men which were written Hieronymus the monk.

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